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THEOLOGY AND MYTHOLOGY IN AESCHYLUS

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I START by making two assumptions, as being facts known to every serious student of antiquity. One is, that Aeschylus was not only a poet but a theologian. The other is, that practically every Greek of that time, if he thought at all concerning deity, did so along mythological lines. The second postulate perhaps needs a little exposition. We have long got rid of the error which supposed the myths, or any of them, to form a kind of "pagan creed," belief in which did or might constitute a test of orthodoxy. We know that creeds are rather rare phenomena, confined to a few religions, of which that of classical Greece was not one. No one in all Hellas was expected to declare that he believed in the Labors of Herakles, and no heresy hunts were started if someone doubted that Prometheus stole fire from heaven. Decent regard for the official cults was, indeed, in a general way, required of everyone, and the public conscience was liable to be shocked if some too bold thinker proclaimed that he did not accept the tacit assumption on which all such cults must rest, if their followers reflect on them at all, namely that certain beings superior to man exist. But everyone had from early childhood heard traditional tales about those beings, which agreed pretty well in their main outlines, no matter whether the teller or the hearer was Athenian or Boiotian, Spartan or Argive. No doubt the less educated and thoughtful simply accepted these stories as they stood:

> nam quid rusticitas non crederet indomitorum
> stulta uirum?

as Prudentius was to complain long afterwards.[1] But even the most critical and skeptical could hardly be unaffected by what truly lay about him from his infancy. If I may cite the Christian poetaster once more [2]

puerorum infantia primo
errorem cum lacte bibit.

And, especially in a city like Athens, adorned on all sides with paintings and sculptures, wherever a contemporary of Aeschylus turned his eyes, he must needs see embodiments in striking form of the national imagination almost as numerous as those which so distressed Prudentius in the Roman streets: [3]

illic Alcides . . .
fuluo aere riget, gemini quoque fratres
corrupta de matre nothi, Ledeia proles . . .
adsistunt etiam priscorum insignia regum:
Tros, Italus Ianusque bifrons genitorque Sabinus,
Saturnusque senex maculoso et corpore Picus,
coniugis epotum sparsus per membra uenenum.

Even radical thinkers tended to use language derived from the sort of tales they had always heard and the imagery which their fellows employed almost without realizing it; witness Empedokles' physical technicalities, which involve a whole miniature mythology of his own devising, along the lines of Hesiod's systematizations, Phonos and Kotos, Chthonie and Heliope, Kallisto and Aischre and the rest of them, to say nothing of the great four, Zeus, Hera, Aidoneus, and Nestis, who are the roots of all things.[4] Now, though Empedokles' dates are not exactly certain, there is no doubt that he and Aeschylus were contemporaries, and while the Sicilian was certainly influenced by Pythagoreanism, the Athenian may have been.[5] Hence the way of thought of one is not a bad sidelight on that of the other.

Certainly acquainted with Aeschylus, very likely his personal friend and admirer, was Pindar, who, being a mainland Greek,

[1] C. Symmachum, I, 79.
[2] Ibid., 201.
[3] Ibid., 226 sqq.
[4] Emped., 19 sqq., 160 sq., Mullach.
[5] Cicero, Tusc., II, 23, when neo-Pythagoreanism was coming to the fore.

is perhaps even a better authority to appeal to if we would know how the tragedian's mind worked. No one needs to be told that Pindar is crammed with myths, and the very fact that he criticizes them is surely proof enough that he took them seriously. He tells us the story of Tantalos and Pelops,[6] and sternly rebukes those thoughtless relaters of the traditional material who say that Pelops was murdered by his unnatural father and his flesh set before the gods to discover if they could recognize what it was. This much of the story Pindar will not believe, because it is inconsistent with his views of the nature of gods; which surely indicates that he is ready enough to believe the rest, including, what seems strange to us, the detail of Poseidon being fascinated by Pelops' personal beauty and carrying him off to heaven for a time. He elsewhere[7] shows pretty clearly that he believes the legend of Apollo, Koronis, and Asklepios by tacitly altering one detail; his Apollo needed no bird to bring him news of what his false love was doing, for he was aware of it through his own omniscience. This, from a poet who (in the Second Olympian, for instance) shows sympathy with, perhaps actual acceptance of, a lofty religious doctrine, be it Pythagorean or what it will, involving belief in an after-life which complements and countervails this one, will suffice to illustrate my point. Such a man, enlightened but no revolutionary, pious in a way already perhaps a little old-fashioned, but neither fanatic nor obscurantist, will neither tell mythological tales without a certain seriousness nor, if he deals in theology, be able to refrain from mythological language and imagery. It is not for him to speak of God or the universe after the manner of an Aristotle, nor again to toy with the traditional gods of his fathers in the light-hearted manner of Kallimachos or Ovid, handling the once venerable narratives as no more than occasions for him to develop pretty fancies or show recondite learning. And a further result is, that in all probability such analysis as I propose to make of the differences between purely mythological and purely (or even chiefly) theological passages in such an author as Aeschylus does not correspond to anything

[6] O. I, 24 sqq.
[7] P. III, 6 sqq.

which passed in his own mind, or at most to a vague realization that he was thinking, now more and now less seriously, of the matter in hand, or viewing it from different angles. Nevertheless I think the attempt worth making; for although we cannot put ourselves inside the consciousness of a foreign writer who died some 2400 years ago, yet since his work, or the fraction of it which has come down to us, is of abiding worth, anything which may lead to a clearer apprehension of its objective, if not of its subjective qualities, has its value.

I begin by taking two passages, both from the Agamemnon, whereof I would label one theological, and indeed one of the great theological passages of all literature, besides being great poetry, and the other mythological only, a mere story about a god in which his traditional nature and actions are simply taken for granted. The first is that extraordinary group of stanzas which interrupts and deepens the Chorus's telling of the mournful tale of Iphigeneia.[8] For purposes of prosaic analysis I render it in my own inadequate prose, being under no illusion that I can thus catch a tithe of its beauty and vigor in the original.

"Zeus, whoe'er he be, if by that name he is pleased to be called, by that name I invoke him. Though I ponder all things, I can conjecture naught but Zeus, if I am truly to cast off the vain burden of care. Of one who aforetime was great, full of strength to do battle with all, it shall not even be said that once he lived. He that came after found one to overthrow him, and is gone. But whosoever, with heart and soul, raises the victorious cry of 'Zeus,' shall attain all wisdom. For Zeus leads men on the road of wisdom, and establishes the decree 'By what they undergo, they shall learn.' Aye, before the heart's door, while it sleeps, there fall the raindrops of pain, bringing remembrance of woe; so prudence comes to those who would not have it. Belike it is a grace forced upon us by the enthroned Powers."

The language is traditional; the Ruler of the Universe is called by the very ancient name of the sky- and weather-god in its usual Greek form, with the addition of the apologetic formula not uncommon in prayers and arising ultimately from the identification of a prayer with a kind of spell, ineffective if every single word is not precisely right, and most ineffective if the most important word, the name of the power addressed,

[8] Aga., 160–183.

is not what it should be. Perhaps, although I do not think so, there is a passing reference to one of the stock tales about Zeus, how he is not the original master of the whole scheme of things, but grandson of the primordial couple, Heaven and Earth.[9] But all these matters are but of the shell; the kernel is a pious and optimistic, but not shallowly optimistic, man's grappling with the ancient problem, the existence of evil and pain in a universe whose government by a righteous deity he postulates as the very basis of his thought. His solution, and it is characteristic of him, is that the divine intent is not easy happiness for man, but hard-won wisdom, which can be got only at the price of experience, often of the bitterest kind. Why this should be the case, he does not attempt to explain; it is the unsearchable will of the ruling power (spoken of, at the very end of the passage, in the plural; the metaphysical argument, which proves only monotheism satisfactory, was still in the future) that it should be so, and Aeschylus' faith is robust enough to trust the divine judgment, here as elsewhere.

Contrast, now, the incidentally introduced story of Apollo and Kassandra.[10] For the construction of one of the most tense and exciting scenes in all tragedy, Greek or other, Aeschylus requires her, a true prophetess whose warnings always fail of their due effect. The common account is that she simply was not believed when she foretold the future, and this the poet makes the basis of his situation, although his working of it out is subtler than that; the Chorus do not so much disbelieve as fail to understand what she tells them, so far as it is relevant to the existing danger. But the traditional legend is left standing. Let me try to give in my rough verses the general sense of the relevant lines.

Kass. I hold mine office of the seer Apollo.
Cho. A god, and yet desirous! Is it so?

[9] I hope, in a commentary on Aeschylus which I am now preparing, to defend my views on this and sundry other passages. There is no space to go into such matters in a short paper like this. But I would mention that, as Uranos is visible every clear day and Kronos has place in the Attic ecclesiastical calendar, it is strange, if they are meant, that Aeschylus should speak of them as gone and forgotten,

[10] Aga., 1202 sqq.

(Here is the one touch of criticism, on a point which would not have troubled Pindar at all. Aeschylus is not so sure that a god is really influenced by passion, like a mortal man.)

Kass. There was a time when shame had stayed my tongue.
Cho. Aye, prosperous folk are ever daintier.
Kass. But oh, his winsomeness, met face to face!
Cho. Found then his love fruition, as love will?
Kass. He had my promise, but I played him false.
Cho. What, after inspiration granted thee?
Kass. Yes. I foretold my people all their doom.
Cho. How scap'dst thou then the wrath of Loxias?
Kass. For that my sin, none gave me credence more.
Cho. Yet, to our minds, thy prophecies ring true.

I could very well imagine a modern playwright introducing a Kassandra, but he would not resort to mythology, unless the whole atmosphere of his drama was deliberately not of our time or country. He would have modern beliefs, or half-beliefs, which would serve him as well; his true prophetess might be a genuine medium before an audience which had had experience of false ones, or a woman with some strange power of seeing time as the relative thing it is, while her hearers had got no further than the ordinary common-sense view of it as something real. Aeschylus is here doing no more than follow the conventions of his day, which lay at the disposal of every teller of tales to use as he saw fit. For the purposes of his plot, Kassandra was literally loved by a literal god in bodily form; it is a tale which will make a good scene, and it does not suit his purpose just here to reflect on its implications. His subject is not inspiration, or the relations between supernatural beings and the daughters of men, but the curse which lay on the house of Pelops, with careful weighing of the amount of ethical responsibility which rested on the members of that house, and of the relation of their experiences to the problem of the moral government of the universe; all this to be put forth in a noble poem, not analyzed in a prose treatise. He may introduce what subsidiary matters he will, and in doing so, bestow as little or as much reflection on them as seems good to him, as playwright and poet.

We have thus seen by example that Aeschylus ranges on oc-

casion from a comparatively abstract consideration of theological questions to a use of mythological themes which almost, if not quite, abstains from any handling of them as other than impressive stories. One caution before we apply these results to other passages. Aeschylus is a dramatist, not a writer of didactic poetry or monologues of any kind. Therefore, when we find a passage in him criticizing something which, according to mythology, a god did, it must not be concluded at once that we have his own views on the credibility of the story or on the nature of gods. One short instance will show what I mean, the famous outburst which shocked Plato,[11]

θεὸς μὲν αἰτίαν φύει βροτοῖς
ὅταν κακῶσαι δῶμα παμπήδην θέλῃ.

or, in the adequate rendering of Mr. D. L. Page,

God first creates a fault in man, when He is minded utterly to ruin his estate.

This is not an Aeschylean comment on what has happened; it is the reaction of Niobe, or of some friend or servant of Niobe (for it is not certain who is speaking) to the death of her children. How Aeschylus continued the story, and what theological conclusions, if any, he came to we do not know. A like consideration applies to the accusation of Thetis against Apollo, the declaration of Eteokles that the gods care nothing for him and his kinsfolk,[12] and several other such utterances. We will deal later with the most discussed of them all.

I propose now to run briefly through the surviving plays in their chronological order, taking characteristic passages from each and asking which of them may be thought to contain Aeschylus' own views on deep matters, that is, to be theological, and which are merely tellings of the traditional stories, perhaps

[11] Niobe, line 15 sq. of the new fragment, for which see Page in Greek Literary Papyri I (Loeb Library), pp. 8–9. Cf. Plato, Rep.. 380a.

[12] Fgt. 350: Sept., 702–703, *θεοῖς μὲν ἤδη πως παρημελήμεθα, / χάρις δ' ἀφ' ἡμῶν ὀλομένων θαυμάζεται.* This is not as thoroughgoing an assertion as it might seem of being forsaken of the gods; Eteokles feels himself as good as dead already and therefore practically outside the province of those gods to whom a Greek normally paid attention and to whom he looked for benefits.

with some touch of criticism, from himself or one of the actors, or some alteration of the received form. The Suppliants at once provides us with a case in point, all the more interesting for being early, of a legend to which the poet would seem to have devoted no little attention, that of Io. So far as dialogue goes, there is little which might not occur in a play of Euripides, indeed in actual and prosaic transactions between one Greek state and another, for we know that mythological arguments played their part in Greek diplomacy down to a far later date than that of Aeschylus. The Danaids want to establish their claim to protection, and to do so, they prove themselves, despite their foreign complection and speech,[13] to be Argive women, at least by descent. They know the sacred legend of the chief local temple, that of Hera, and they can recite their pedigree back to the central figure of that strange tale.[14]

In the lyric passages, however, we find something perhaps more interesting. The Chorus there appeal repeatedly, not to any man, but to Zeus himself. They base their claim to his regard on their descent from Io, much as if they were discussing the matter with a human power; but side by side with this acceptance of the legend, there is something deeper, something, to my mind, typically Aeschylean. This same god who was the lover of Io, and therefore the ancestor, though an illegitimate one, of the Danaids, is something much more than a picturesque figure in a story. He and his powers are taken very seriously, and with no little insight into what a deity must be if he is to be deserving of worship by thoughtful adorers. His ways are past finding out; [15] he puts down the mighty from their seat,[16] and that without effort; [17] all that he does prospers.[18] He therefore should judge the cause of the Danaids favorably, not only because they are the descendants of the woman he loved, but because their enemies are unjust and guilty of ὕβρις.[19] Thus,

[13] Suppl., 154 sq., 119–130.

[14] Ibid., 291 sqq.

[15] Ibid., 93–95, cf. 1057–1058.

[16] Ibid., 96 sqq.

[17] This seems at all events to be the general meaning of ibid., 99–100, whatever the exact reading.

[18] Ibid., 91–92.

[19] For instance, ibid., 104 sqq.

side by side, we have the mythological Zeus, who is likely to favor his own descendants, as a man might, and the theological, the God of righteousness who espouses the cause of the righteous and uses His omnipotence to forward it.

The same trilogy gives us, we no longer know in exactly what context, though we may guess that it was at the trial of Hypermestra, a view of deity which is intermediate between purely theological and merely mythological. It was to reappear in Euripides especially, but it was a commonplace of the philosophical allegorizings of myths in many ages. In Aeschylus, as in Euripides, it becomes poetry, not dry speculation. The plot of the Danaid-plays deals, as Aeschylus' plots regularly do, with a moral problem (Aeschylus, it may be mentioned in passing, was not interested in sociology and had never heard of mother-right, save perhaps as a curious custom of far-off barbarians, which did not concern him). Given on the one hand the duty of obedience to the great unwritten laws of the universe, one of which is "increase and multiply," and on the other, the right of every one to be defended, or defend himself, against βία (in this case a marriage against the will of the bride and of her natural guardian), what ought a woman in the situation of the Danaids to do, when confronted with the accomplished fact of this unwelcome marriage, which yet is of a kind which every Greek would think normal and proper? [20] For the daughters of Danaos are ἐπίκληροι, having no brothers, and therefore their male cousins are their almost inevitable husbands, only the family quarrel standing in the way. Hypermestra, according to what I think the more likely construe of the relevant passage in a much later play,[21] was ruled by the natural desire of offspring. She therefore was obedient to Aphrodite, not the wanton love-goddess of so much legend of all manner of dates, but the sober Aphrodite Pandemos of Athenian cult, goddess of marriage.[22] And therefore Aphrodite herself appeared on the Aeschylean stage, in a scene which I wish we could recover from some heaven-sent papyrus, to set

[20] Cf. Suppl., 387 sqq., where the King suggests this.

[21] P. V., 865, where I take παίδων with ἵμερος, not with μίαν.

[22] For Aphrodite Pandemos, see Farnell, C. G. S., II, p. 658.

forth her own functions. But let us see what manner of Aphrodite she was. We have this much left of her speech: [23]

> Pure Heaven yearns to deal love's wound to Earth,
> And Earth no less is of that wedlock fain.
> Then fall the raindrops from her lover Sky
> And moisten her, wherefore she bears for men
> Lush meadow-grass and the life-giving corn,
> And fruits withal, which from those glistening drops
> Increase and ripen. This I bring to pass.

There surely is little enough mythology here. This Aphrodite is a great natural force, almost as abstract as one of Empedokles' personifications. If this is really part of a defence of Hypermestra, comparable to Apollo's advocacy of Orestes in the Eumenides, or a divine intervention on her behalf, like that of a Euripidean *deus ex machina*, the argument would seem to be that she, by refusing to kill her husband-cousin, has acted in obedience to something cosmic, far greater than any petty family squabble. How far such a being is from the conventional Aphrodite of mythology, the mistress of Anchises, for instance, is very plain; but she lacks one very important attribute of the Zeus of the great passage in the Agamemnon. The force embodied in her is indeed beneficial, but it is not shown as moral, as working for righteousness. One might even imagine it as subordinate to a greater power guiding the whole of Nature for its own high ends; but there is not only no context available, but we lack sufficient knowledge of the poet's views at any date possible for the Suppliants to say whether or not any such idea would occur to him.

With the Persians, we pass almost out of mythology. Aeschylus probably neither knew nor cared much about the beliefs or religious customs of the Persians. He assumes that they worship some kind of gods, that they include among them the Sun and someone at least corresponding to Apollo, that they believe in a god who can influence the weather, that they have a cult of chthonian deities, including Ge and Hermes, and a tendance of their dead, if not actual hero-worship; also that some of

[23] Fgt. 44.

them are irreligious.[24] In short, he supposes, as a Greek generally did regarding foreigners, unless he had positive information to the contrary, that their religious ideas and behavior were very like his own. He further assumes that they know of one or two stories which actually are Greek, those of Aias and of Helle [25] for instance; but this is on a par with Pindar's [26] assurance that there is no city so foreign or of such outlandish speech that it has not heard of Telamon, Aias, and Peleus. The more or less real heroes and heroines of the great sagas are so famous that no one can have failed to know something about them, and as a matter of fact, we know that many non-Greeks did, witness the Etruscan monuments. But the play is noteworthy for our purposes, for it contains an early example of a pretty widespread popular idea, as it seems to have been, and some theologizing which we may fairly suppose the poet's own, or at least approved by him.

The former is the conception of destined events as settled in all but their exact time. It was fated and foretold that disaster should befall the house of Hystaspes; but Dareios had hoped that this would not be so for a long while yet, later at all events than the lifetime of his son. But Xerxes' own presumption had hastened the event.[27] This conception of destiny is quite possibly, I think, of Asianic origin. At all events, it is to be found in connection with an alleged response of Apollo (whose Asianic contacts, however he came by them, are well enough attested), in a story which Aeschylus may possibly have known, since it is told of Kroisos of Lydia.[28] It further appears in an elaborate form in Etruscan divination,[29] for their experts claimed to have

[24] See Pers., 216 and often, 232, 502, 206, 495, 219, 628 sqq., 497. In the last passage we get perhaps an example of an idea afterwards very common, that barbarians generally worshipped chiefly or only the visible gods, here Sky and Earth, 499.

[25] Pers., 596, 876.

[26] Pind., I. vi, 24–26.

[27] Pers., 739 sqq. Here, incidentally, the god who sends the disaster is called Zeus, but how little more than "God" this means is indicated by Dareios immediately afterwards speaking of θεὸς in practically the same context, 741, with the plural θεοὺς between the two. Cf. the comment, supr., p. 3, on Aga., 160 sqq.

[28] See Herodotos, I, 91, 1–3.

[29] See Thulin, Die etruskische Disciplin, III, p. 57. I take the Asianic origin of the Etruscans for granted.

the power of postponing a doom for a moderate number of years, ten for an individual, thirty for a city. In any case, it is ultimately popular, the result of a conception of fate as a sentence or decree like that of an earthly potentate, which will have its effect sometime, but may be hastened or postponed. Hebrew tradition, indeed, shows us something of this kind. In 1 Kings, 11, 11–12, Yahweh is speaking to the offending Solomon much after the fashion of a suzerain to his unsatisfactory vassal, and says "I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding, in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake; but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son." A Semitologist may perhaps be able to say from what source the author of 1 Kings got the idea.

The theological view is briefly stated, but as it is put into the mouth of the semi-divine spirit of Dareios, it may be taken to be authoritative, that is to say consonant with Aeschylus' own views. It is contained in the famous line [30]

ἀλλ' ὅταν σπεύδῃ τις αὐτός, χὠ θεὸς συνάπτεται.

which someone has rendered,

"When the fool to folly hasteth, God shall speed him to his fall."

A translation not quite adequate to the context, for the fool in question is not exactly hastening to folly, but hurrying on the doom which, if he had been prudent and reverent, might have been put off. But the interesting point is the form which the divine action takes, by making the man still more reckless and hasty than he otherwise would have been. I think we shall see later that in Aeschylus' view divine retribution is not an arbitrary infliction of penalties but largely consists of causing the sinner to go on sinning and thus to punish himself. It is not simply a hardening of Pharaoh's heart, but rather a natural law of ethics, theologically stated. We might say that the habitual wrong doer finds it increasingly difficult to break himself of his evil custom and take to more wholesome ways.

[30] Pers., 742. The scholiast is of opinion, perhaps rightly, that Aeschylus means that God "lends a hand" (συνεπιλαμβάνεται) whether the "hastening" is towards good or evil.

Turning to the Seven against Thebes, and adding what we can tentatively reconstruct of the trilogy to which it belonged, I think we may say that Aeschylus found the mythological material ready moralized for him. Delphoi began fairly early to interest itself in ethical problems, especially those which had a natural connection with the purificatory rites in which it tended to specialize.[31] The recurrent motif, well known to folklorists,[32] of the prediction which, however unlikely it sounds and however elaborate precautions are taken against its fulfilment, turns out to be true, is one easily capable of being moralized, and often may furnish a new turn to the story, also stock,[33] of how wise counsel was proved to be wise indeed by the event, whether or not it was accepted at the time, and even though its form was paradoxical, Apollo's clergy certainly made abundant use of it, for Greek tradition is full of tales of men who consulted the oracle and fared well or ill according as they obeyed it (or understood it) or not.[34] The lesson to be taught was, naturally, the folly of disregarding Apollo, and incidentally his accredited interpreters. One of the finest products of this Delphic propaganda was the story of the House of Labdakos as Aeschylus found it, for the advice of Apollo in this case had been to submit meekly to the consequences of ancestral sin lest a new folly bring worse suffering in its train; the advice was kindly given, but not taken, and so the house came to an end. The story began with the sin of Laios against his host Pelops, and with some aspect of that sin or its consequences we must, I think, suppose that the first play of the trilogy, the lost Laios, dealt. The divine punishment took its traditional form, as commended by the dictum of Rhadamanthys,

εἴ κε πάθοι τά τ' ἔρεξε, δίκη κ' ἰθεῖα γένοιτο,

and echoed by Aeschylus himself in more than one passage.[35]

[31] This was recognized, though somewhat imperfectly, as early as 1880 by Bouché-Leclercq, Hist. de la divin. dans l'antiquité, III, p. 145 sqq. See further H. W. Peake, The Delphic Oracle, p. 299 sqq.

[32] It is M370 sqq. in Stith Thompson, Motif-Index of Folk-Literature, Helsinki, 1932–1936.

[33] J21 Stith Thompson.

[34] The story of Battos (Hdt., IV, 155 sqq.) is a good example.

[35] Arist., Eth. Nic., 1132b25; Aesch., Aga., 1564, Choeph., 313, fgt. 456.

Laios, to satisfy his own lust, had deprived Pelops of a son; therefore the punishment fell upon him through his own hopes of fatherhood. He might never have a son, or if he did, that son would kill him and lead to the ruin of the city.[36] But he neglected Apollo's thrice-repeated warning, and yielded to his desires, trying to defeat the fated doom by exposing the child to what seemed certain death. Followed the horrors of Oidipus' career. Just how all this was handled we cannot of course know, since we have only the references in the Seven to what has preceded. But we do know that Oidipus in turn was not innocent, for, in Aeschylus as in the epic which at this point at least he follows, it was his curse on his own sons which set the next action in motion, the quarrel between Eteokles and Polyneikes.[37] Here the surviving play takes up the story. As elsewhere in Aeschylus, the characters, so far as we see them, — only Eteokles is drawn for us at full length, Polyneikes being a vague figure of whom we catch a glimpse through the angry eyes of Amphiaraos [38] and the awed gaze of the Scout,[39] — are never the puppets of an impersonal fate but fully human and responsible. It is not the gods but Eteokles' opinion of the gods which at last whirls him down the stream of Kokytos,[40] to use his own vigorous image. Again and again the Chorus, who, once recovered from their initial fright (ironically, it is Eteokles who calms them) can be the vehicle of the poet's own sanities, insist that the princes are not driven helplessly by a power outside themselves to their desperate actions. In a way the morality is Homeric, as old as the familiar complaint of Zeus in the Odyssey [41] that men blame the gods for causing the evils which in truth their own frowardness brings upon them, sometimes despite divine warnings, as happened when Aigisthos would not be persuaded to leave his wicked ways, though Hermes was sent to give him wholesome advice. But this is not to say that Aeschylus allows no outside force which influences the actions

[36] Sept., 745 sqq.
[37] Sept., 709, 723–725, and elsewhere.
[38] Ibid., 576 sqq.
[39] Ibid., 631 sqq.
[40] Ibid., 686 sqq.
[41] α 328 sqq.

of the brothers, or of the rest of their family. The Erinys, the curse-power, raised by Oidipus is very real, not a poetic figure. It is, say the Chorus,[42] a god, but not like the gods. It is a cryptic saying, but intelligible if one remembers that on occasion the word θεὸς can be largely depersonalized and made little more definite than δαίμων, not much clearer-cut even than *numen*. In Hesiod, φήμη, not a personification like Virgil's Fama, but the literal talk of the people at large, is declared to be a θεός. How much more, then, an Erinys. But the gods generally, the ordinary Homeric deities, are givers of good things, as the scholiast on the Aeschylean passage reminds us.[43] This power, then, which does nothing but incite to ill-doing, is clearly not one of them. Greeks were as a rule uncompromising monists, but Aeschylus' monism never was of that shallow type which treats evil as Mr. Podsnap did things of which he disapproved. He is ready to allow that there are forces, more or less personal, of power superior to that of man, which are bad, not righteous and beneficent like the gods of his theology. It is the line of thought which, many years later, gave rise to a complicated demonology, influential alike with pagans and Christians when the great religious controversies between them set in. It will be remembered that, according to this, a number of beings existed who were inferior to the gods but superior to man in intelligence and power, although not necessarily in morals, for some of them were wicked.[44] We need not go into it here, but I would remark in passing that I think it one of several uprushes (the Orphic literature seems to be another) of thought less systematic and more popular than that of professed philosophers into the sphere of at least quasi-philosophic speculation. It may be, as Professor Linforth supposes,[45] that what we know as Orphic literature and doctrine is the result, not of any one movement, but of the activities, attested by Plato,[46] of those priests and priestesses who made it their business to

[42] Sept., 721.

[43] Hes., W. D., 763–764; Verg., A., IV, 173 sqq.; θ 325.

[44] The fullest source of information on this topic is Th. Hopfner, Griechisch-ägyptischer Offenbarungszauber, Leipzig, 1921, 1924.

[45] The Arts of Orpheus, Univ. of California Press, 1941, p. 294 sqq.

[46] Meno, 81a10 sqq.

find an explanation for their own ceremonies. But I doubt if this be the whole truth. In Greece, as elsewhere, there were minds not so radically tempered as to insist on going to the very foundations of the subject, in this case their own religion, which interested them, taking nothing for granted and arguing from first principles, yet sufficiently alert to ask themselves what the time-honored names, legends, and rites meant. For an instance of this on a comparatively low level, I would point to the weird collection of tabus, purely savage in origin, which seem to have been taken up and even to some extent systematized by certain Pythagoreans.[47] A much higher type of mind was that of Aeschylus, to whom such a concept as that of the Erinyes was neither a traditional doctrine to be accepted without scruple or hesitation nor a mere fable of which none but purely literary use could be made in serious writing, but an idea which he felt to correspond to some kind of truth. Far from being a rationalist after the Euripidean pattern, he seems to have felt that an Erinys is a power which really exists, for on occasion human beings seem impelled towards mad actions, the sequel of ill-doing in the past, as if by something outside themselves. He is willing to accept the traditional names, Erinys, Ate, and so on, for this. These names, that is, represent realities to him, whereof Ate certainly is an abstract noun, capable of being more or less personified,[48] whereas an Erinys needs no personifying, being already a person, to whose nature and functions Aeschylus was to devote no little thought, as we shall see presently. But in the Seven, she is apparently evil, brought into being by the ill-directed anger of a father and having no other influence on the sons except to encourage their quarrel. In fact, she is much the same kind of fiend as was afterwards described in the same connection by Statius,[49] though in the Greek she is not what she is in the Latin, a sensational piece of epic machinery to be tricked out with all the artificial horrors of a too clever rhetoric.

The gaps in our tradition have left a long period of time be-

[47] See, for particulars, F. Boehm, De symbolis Pythagoreis, diss., Berlin, 1905.

[48] As she is in Sept., 601 (which I think is Aeschylean, whether it belongs there or not), Pers., 1007, Aga., 386 and elsewhere.

[49] Stat., Theb., I, 88 sqq.

tween the Seven and the next surviving work, the great Trilogy. But it is fortunate that this also deals with a theme which appears to have interested Aeschylus greatly, both as poet and as theologian, the story of the hereditary curse. The House of Pelops furnishes a close parallel in this respect to that of Labdakos. A sin, that of Thyestes, has brought about another sin, the revenge of Atreus, and consequently the curse pronounced upon him and his line. With such an inheritance, Agamemnon, like Eteokles, has in his house the unwelcome guests of Kassandra's vision,[50] who are drunk with blood and will not be driven forth. He sins in his turn, and, like his father and uncle, he offends against the natural affections, when he sacrifices Iphigeneia. Here a divine agent enters the story; it was Artemis who sent the contrary winds to stay which the king offered up his daughter.[51] Like Laios, Agamemnon was faced with a hard choice; he must either abandon his expedition or murder his own child.[52] Aeschylus, speaking through the mouth of the Chorus of Elders, leaves us in no doubt which way the choice ought to have gone. Not once but many times they insist that the war was not worth fighting, so much bloodshed and suffering for the sake of a piece of wantonness like Helen. The action of the goddess was no cruelty, no revenge for some petty insult offered to her, as in the folk-tales which grew up around the story, or from which it sprung (we have no sufficient evidence one way or the other), but an act of divine justice. It is not for the sake of mere diversity or as a digressive piece of moralizing that the great passage, already quoted, concerning the government of Zeus is introduced here. The whole story is an instance of that same government: Artemis is Zeus' daughter, and the very lines which introduce her as the cause of Agamemnon's dilemma emphasize her purity and her kindness. Here, assuredly, we have mythology pressed into the service of theological thought, an old legend or folk-tale made over into a magnificently poetical account of the working of the moral control

[50] Aga., 1188 sqq.

[51] Aga., 135 sqq. For the interpretation, cf. E. Petersen in Rhein. Mus., N. F 66 (1911), p. 3 sq.

[52] Aga., 205 sqq.

of the world. During the years intervening between the Seven and the Agamemnon (467–458) Aeschylus had learned much about the presentation of human character, but he still follows the same general outlines as in the earlier work. Agamemnon, like Eteokles, is shown, but more vividly, the prey of that ἄτη which, according to Sophokles, or rather some unknown sage whom he quotes, makes the bad seem good.[53] Once his ill choice is made, he clearly is increasingly certain that it is the right one. He is brutal to Iphigeneia at the moment of the sacrifice.[54] He returns home full of boastings over his own achievement, although he allows, with a certain air of magnanimity, that the gods had their share in it (they were μεταίτιοι).[55] He gloats over the destruction he has wrought and emphasizes that it was all for the sake of a woman, the very thing which had made the war unpopular at home.[56] He is rude to Klytaimnestra, whom he regards evidently as a fond and over-talkative creature to be silenced as soon as possible,[57] and he incidentally expects her to do what the meekest Greek wife might boggle at, give welcome to his latest new mistress, Kassandra.[58] All this incidentally helps the plot of the play: Aeschylus knew well enough, from the history of his own and other states, including their contemporary history, that a revolution is not brought about by killing one man and that any government, legal or illegal, must have some sort of popular backing if it is to exist for more than a few hours. Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos clearly have their supporters. But the main interest, the one which the author stresses, is the ethical and theological, the reaction of Agamemnon to the way the gods deal with him and his line. To some extent what he does after leaving Aulis is forced upon him by the mere logical sequence of events, but it was he himself who put his neck in the yoke of Necessity;[59] he is a man sorely tried, but remains a responsible being. Klytaimnestra has

[53] Soph., Ant., 621.
[54] Aga., 231 sqq.
[55] Aga., 811.
[56] Aga., 823 sqq., 803.
[57] Aga., 914 sqq.
[58] Aga., 950 sqq.
[59] Aga., 219.

a case; the clash between her and her husband is not one of force with force only but of one conception of justice with another.[60] It was a sinner whom Klytaimnestra slew, but the slaying was none the less murder; for it was her husband whom she put to death. Moreover, she was a subject and her victim was her king. It can hardly be supposed that Aeschylus, brought up in a republic, had any profound tenderness for kings as such, i.e., that he would have thought it a lesser crime to murder a man like Perikles, for instance. It is only foreigners who say that the king and the state are one,[61] and to speak of kings as a sort of gods belongs to the language either of Orientals, as in several passages of the Persians, or, as I think, to echoes of Homeric court-language here and there in a heroic setting.[62] But the poet did have a great respect for the institution of the State, as did every normal Greek, and therefore for the person and office of any lawful and regular magistrate who was temporarily or permanently at the head of it. If he had been asked by whom, in accordance with the justice which rules the universe, Agamemnon should have been punished for the slaughter of Iphigeneia, I think he would have said "By the gods themselves, not by any human hand." Nevertheless, there is more than the fancy of a woman driven half-mad by excitement and evil triumph in the declaration of Klytaimnestra that it is not herself, but the daimon of the House of Atreus who has done the deed.[63] An Aeschylean god is willing to work through a human agent, if one is ready to his hand; yet even that does not make the agent a mere tool, freed by his passivity from moral responsibility. As an even profounder religious genius is reported to have phrased it, *ἀνάγκη γάρ ἐστιν ἐλθεῖν τὰ σκάνδαλα, πλὴν οὐαὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐκείνῳ δι' οὗ τὸ σκάνδαλον ἔρχεται.*[64] As I see it, a great part of the trilogy, one might say the whole, has for its theme the question of the attitude of the righteous powers in whom the poet believes towards these same human agents.

[60] Cf. Choeph., 461, *Ἄρης Ἄρει ξυμβαλεῖ, δίκα δίκᾳ.*

[61] Suppl., 370.

[62] Notably, as I argue in my forthcoming commentary, in the style in which the Chorus in Aga. address the queen.

[63] Aga., 1500 sqq.

[64] Matth., 18, 7.

What do they think of the man, or woman, who does a wrong, not to do a right but in the very act of doing it, or, perhaps one had better say, of the wrong-doer whose crime is in some sort an act of justice as well?

A part of the answer is furnished by the Choephoroe. Klytaimnestra, and Aigisthos too, having sinned must be punished, and in this life, however it may fare with those whom "darkness finds still unjudged." [65] The task has been given by Apollo to the one person who is fitted for it by his place in the royal house, Orestes, left by the death of his father and the absence of his uncle the sole head of the family, and therefore the natural upholder of it in feud against all comers, including his own cousin Aigisthos; for the undivided family was long a thing of the past when Aeschylus wrote, and it is interesting that no one seems to regard this strife between men so close akin to one another as particularly shocking. It so happened that one of the culprits was the avenger's own mother. Now she, being one of the women of the family which he headed, came under his jurisdiction, and to deal with her offence was solely his business. So far the Homeric attitude to the events; Orestes did quite rightly in putting the criminals to death as soon as he was able, and there is no more to say, except that he won great renown by a so exemplary performance of his duty, — not even an aside to the effect that the duty must have been painful to his natural feelings.[66] Indeed, Homer does not think it worth while even to mention how Klytaimnestra died, for it is not in point and was Orestes' own affair; what else could he have done with her? It probably would have shocked both Homer and his audience if anyone had suggested that the Erinyes then took a share in the business, for what wrong had Klytaimnestra received at the hands of her son, or indeed of anyone else, for the sacrifice

[65] See Choeph., 65.

[66] The Scholiast on α 300, dogmatic as some moderns and with no better reason, roundly asserts that Homer did not know of the killing of Klytaimnestra, which is probably a historical fact and, fact or fiction, is necessary to round out the story. Eustathios, p. 1418, 34, shows, for once, better sense. Athena does not mention Klytaimnestra because her case is not in point; she wants to encourage Telemachos, by the imperfectly parallel case of Orestes, to stand by his father, not to incite him against his virtuous mother.

of Iphigeneia is post-Homeric? The cases of Meleagros and Oidipus are not parallel, for they had indeed wronged their respective mothers, albeit in different degrees.[67]

But, as commonly happens in times of economic and political upset, the enlightened attitude of the Homeric gentry was succeeded by a recrudescence of what our grandfathers would have not unjustly called the darker beliefs of the people. One of these, — we find it for the first time in Stesichoros,[68] — was, that the Erinyes would implacably, nay almost automatically, visit with their wrath anyone who violated, for whatever reason, that ancient tie between mother and son which is older than all systems of relationship, because it is a natural fact and they are social conventions, and for the same reason has outlived one after another of them. It was the vulgar who were still of opinion, as late as the days of the Shandys and Yorick, that there must certainly have been some sort of consanguinity between the Duchess of Suffolk and her son,[69] and it is from the imagination and conscience of the vulgar that the Erinyes sprang. Even when Apollo took a part in the story, he was faced with very material avengers of blood, such as the popular fancy would conjure up, for it would seem that Stesichoros told how he lent Orestes a bow and arrows to keep them off. Now Aeschylus came mid-way between such naïvété and the rationalism of Euripides, to whom Erinyes and bow alike are the feverish visions of a half-mad youth's tortured mind.[70] His Erinyes are real, although at first they are visible to Orestes only,[71] and their appearance is fiendish enough; but they are no powers of evil, when they state their own case, but rather champions of the distressed,[72] co-mates of Justice herself, embodying the wholesome fear which is needed to restrain those who will not be righteous of their own accord. Apollo himself seems to respect this aspect of their functions, for he does not, as a modern would, or for that matter an ancient moralist or

[67] Cf. I 566 sqq., λ 279–280.
[68] Fgt. 7 Vürtheim.
[69] Tristram Shandy, Vol. IV, end of chap. 30.
[70] Eur., Or., 268 sqq.
[71] Choeph., 1048 sqq., Eum., 46 sqq.
[72] Eum., 507 sqq.

lawyer of later date, object that they regard only the deed and not the motive.[73] He reproaches them for being too savage in punishing [74] and his final plea is one whose oddness has excited attention ere now. After urging that marriage is a tie full as sacred as blood-kinship, and that therefore they should extend their sanction to protect it also,[75] he goes on, before the Areiopagos, to develop the doctrine that mother and child are not really akin, but only father and child, a medical theory (Aeschylus was interested in medical theories) whereof there are traces elsewhere in Greek writings, though, unfortunately for any study of the poet's sources, not in an early author.[76] He grants, that is to say, that the sternest measures are justified to guard the sanctity of the family and of kinship, only one must be properly informed as to the meanings of these terms. The case of Orestes is border-line; he has violated one tie of kinship, but did so to vindicate another and a yet more sacred one, incomparably more sacred on Apollo's theory. The jury are not fully convinced, since half of them vote one way and half the other; but Athena, in whom I think Mr. Knight is not far wrong in seeing an embodiment of "a civic life, directly worshipping its own harmony and self-preservation in the goodness of the city," [77] lays down, by her casting-vote and her words,[78] a principle to guide her State; preference, when such conflicts arise, for that sanctity which involves reverence for the father. She neither confirms nor denies Apollo's physiological doctrine, but acts as if it were true. There is thus an end put to the long conflict, and the very powers who had been so active in it remain in Athens, not to curse but to bless, Eumenides instead of Erinyes. Perhaps one may very prosaically sum up a part of

[73] So Apollo himself regarded it, if there is any truth in the story in Aelian, V. H., III, 44 (source and date unknown).

[74] Eum., 186 sqq.

[75] Ibid., 213 sqq.

[76] Ibid., 658 sqq. For Aeschylus' medical knowledge, cf. Aga., 1121 sqq., Choeph., 183. The theory is called Egyptian by Diod. Sic., I, 80, 4, but, it would seem, is mentioned as Pythagorean (i.e., belonging to the medical school of Kroton? if so, perhaps we have a clue to the notion, cf. note 5, that Aeschylus was a Pythagorean himself), by Metopos ap. Stob., Floril., I, 64 (p. 29 Gaisford).

[77] W. F. J. Knight in J. H. S., LXIII (nominally 1943, really 1945), p. 19.

[78] Eumen., 734 sqq.

the grand poetry of this play by saying that the message sent by the righteous god through his own daughter to her favored city is the legal maxim *expedit ut sit finis litium.*

In conclusion, I add a very few and inadequate words concerning the most puzzling of Aeschylus' plays from the point of view of this paper, the Prometheus Bound. To begin with, I hold it to be part of his very last work, one of a pair of plays composed for performance in Sicily during the visit to that island on which he died. I think that it was never put on at Athens, at any rate during its author's lifetime, never formed part of a trilogy, and depended both for its chorus and its audience on one of the fire-new republics which had come into being after the great kings, or tyrants, according to one's political attitude, had ceased to be. It may have been played at Gela, since the ancient life says Aeschylus died there.[79]

But be this as it may, the central puzzle of the Prometheus has been a hundred times discussed in print. Zeus, elsewhere in Aeschylus the all-just, all-wise, benevolent ruler of the universe, here acts the part of a jealous tyrant, unsure of his place, which he has won not so much by sheer brute force as through the wise counsel of Prometheus. Especially, he is pointlessly and unprovokedly cruel to mankind, whom he would have destroyed but for Prometheus' intervention, and severe beyond measure against the good Titan himself. Nor is there any clear evidence that in the next play the two antagonists were reconciled and Zeus shown to have been somehow in the right after all, for one of the few indications we have left is that after Herakles appeared, Prometheus spoke of his destined deliverer as "this beloved son of a hated sire." [80] Now on the one hand I have too much respect for Aeschylus as a poet and playwright to allow that he may have brought his plot to the flattest and tamest of conclusions by making Prometheus in the second play do what he spends much of the first in declaring he will not do, give up the secret which he holds in return for liberty. I have also too high an opinion of him as a theologian to

[79] The arguments for this view are too lengthy to set forth here; I hope to present at least a summary of them in my commentary on Aeschylus, and also to try to explain the poor and jejune choral part of the surviving play.

[80] Fgt. 201.

think that he was content throughout a serious work to use a purely mythological Zeus, a figure as indifferent morally as a member of the chorus in one of his satyr-plays. While owning frankly that I do not know how he untied the knot of his argument, I insist that we hear only one side of the case, and that someone, perhaps Ge-Themis, or Herakles himself, presumably stated the other side of it in the second play. I also throw out a very tentative suggestion. It is this.

Virgil,[81] who knew the tragedians, though he was not especially well seen in Aeschylus, has a remarkable passage in the Georgics, in which he describes the transition from the Golden Age to the reign of Zeus. It is, as one might expect, founded ultimately on Hesiod,[82] but its tone is very different and more optimistic. All manner of hardships which had been unknown before came with the change of celestial government; but the result was far from bad. Men perforce learned all manner of arts, agriculture, astronomy, navigation, fishing, metallurgy. They ceased, that is, to be mere food-gatherers, pensioners on Nature's bounty, and became what the country-bred poet heartily admired, sturdy, ingenious producers and hard workers, like the best of the Italian countrymen then and now. Is this by any chance the Aeschylean Zeus's defence? I have no sort of proof that it is; but I make the suggestion, in hopes that some more fortunate or more diligent explorer may find an answer, yes or no.

[81] G., I, 125 sqq.

[82] Especially W. D., 42 sqq., Theog., 562 sqq.

MAGICAL AMULETS

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Most of the objects to be discussed in this paper belong to the class known as "Gnostic" amulets. That term has been so widely accepted that there is something to be said for retaining it; for even those who recognize its inaccuracy find it a convenient designation for things that cannot easily be brought under any other descriptive name.

Gnosis is a name applied to certain systems of religious philosophy whose origin has been much debated, but which certainly manifested themselves as heresies in the Christian church of the second and third centuries. Now amulets, though fundamentally magical, tend to take religion as an aid and ally, just as the converse is often true; and wherever amulets are made with the help of the graphic and plastic arts, they are likely to invoke, by their designs and inscriptions, the support of local divinities, and to absorb into themselves local religious ideas, or at least religious expressions and symbols. But the tendency does not stop there. In its desire to enlist all possible supernatural aid, magic, especially in its later development, calls upon many deities without regard to their local connections. Even in the classical period people regarded magic that came from a distance as especially powerful, particularly when it seemed to spring from a primitive way of life; hence Athenian writers refer to the unusual powers of Thessalian witches.[1] In the magical documents of the Graeco-Roman period gods and demons of several countries are summoned to aid the operator. Magicians who were Egyptians or Egyptianized Greeks name Babylonian and Jewish or Syrian divinities in their charms. Wherever any knowledge of Gnostic mythology or Gnostic ideas had got abroad, it was natural that Gnostic elements should make their appearance in magical texts.

The writers may or may not have belonged to a Gnostic sect;

[1] Ar. Nub. 749.

but the documents themselves, whether written on papyrus or carved on gem-stones, can seldom be regarded as monuments of Gnostic religion, just as an incantation containing the words Iao Sabaoth cannot safely be claimed as the work of a Jewish master of magic. In brief, Gnosticism is merely one of several religious influences that have left their mark on these amulets. As a group they cannot be labelled as Gnostic; individual pieces that can be so described are rare, and not one of those few can be safely assigned to a particular Gnostic sect. We find that earlier writers from Baronius and Macarius to Bellermann and King confidently treat many of these amulets, especially those inscribed with the name Abrasax, as Basilidian; [2] yet Harnack's remark still holds good, that it is doubtful whether even one of the hundreds of gems inscribed Abrasax is really a product of the school of Basilides.[3]

Before we proceed further, it is worth while to define the subject and the scope of this investigation. In the broadest sense of the word, an amulet is any object which by its contact or its close proximity to the person who owns it, or to any possession of his, exerts power for his good, either by keeping evil from him and his property, or by endowing him with positive advantages. The word talisman is virtually a synonym of amulet, although some writers have attempted, without support in general usage, to differentiate the two words. The material of an amulet may be of any sort, animal, vegetable, or mineral, and the amulet-maker does not shrink from using the most repulsive matter for his purpose, herein resembling the medicine-man; in fact one can scarcely draw a line between popular *materia medica* and the things that were believed to be useful as amulets. Small bags taken from the necks of child-patients in a hospital in Egypt were found to contain such oddments as the dried head of a hoopoe, a dried chameleon, the cast skin of a snake, other unrecognizable débris of vegetable or animal

[2] Caes. Baronius, Annales Ecclesiastici (ed. Theiner, 1864), 2, 188 f.(A. C. 120, 12–17); Joannes Macarius, Abraxas seu Apistopistus (1657), 9–11; J. J. Bellermann, Versuch über die Gemmen der Alten mit dem Abraxas-Bilde (1817), 7–10; C. W. King, The Gnostics and their Remains[2] (1887), 245.

[3] A. Harnack, Gesch. der altchristlichen Litteratur, I, 161.

origin, pebbles, etc.[4] Doubtless the virtues ascribed to these ingredients were partly medical, partly magical. If amulets such as these were used in ancient Greece and Egypt, as they probably were, they have disintegrated and disappeared; but one class of perishable amulets has come down to us in considerable numbers, and often in good preservation. These are charms and incantations written on small pieces of papyrus, then rolled or folded into compact form and worn upon the person. The texts of these papyri have much in common with the necessarily briefer inscriptions on magical stones, and must be studied in connection with them; but they will be used here only for occasional illustration. The amulets with which this article is concerned are, with a very few exceptions, made of stone or metal.

Belief in the efficacy of amulets depends upon certain primitive concepts of the mind, namely, notions that supernatural power may be inherent in some person, animal, or material object, or that it may at least reside there temporarily. The latter lies at the root of fetichism, as it is known among the negroes of West Africa; both are akin to the idea of *mana*, that vague supernatural power which was brought to the attention of anthropologists by the Melanesian studies of Codrington,[5] and which has added a useful term to the technical vocabulary of workers in the history of religion.[6] A fetich, or an amulet, may be apprehended as something that can give any sort of benefit that the possessor may desire; but it is probable that from the beginning certain objects were believed to have powers peculiar to themselves, and the special powers imputed to them were often determined by the principle of similarity. To mention

[4] A number of such bags were sent to the Museum of the University of Michigan, because of their interest from an anthropological point of view, along with the objects that the University expedition was allowed to retain from its excavation at Karanis. A close parallel in ancient times is to be found in Jul. Africanus VII, 17 (p. 39 Vieillefond); the dried head of a bat sewn up in a leather bag makes the wearer wakeful as long as he has it on.

[5] R. H. Codrington. The Melanesians, Oxford, 1891.

[6] See the article "Mana" in Hastings, Encycl. of Religion and Ethics, VIII, 375–380, for a good discussion of both the local application of the term and its use in scientific terminology.

only examples that fall within the scope of this study, certain gem-stones were believed to exert powers suggested by their color. Galactite, an unidentified stone, evidently whitish, was supposed to promote the flow of milk in women and animals; amethyst, apparently because of its wine-like color, was believed to enable a man to drink heavily without becoming intoxicated.[7] This idea of medico-magical power manifested through similarity doubtless goes back to a remote period, and it continued, as the "doctrine of signatures," to exert an influence in medicine down to modern times, when scientific methods gradually got the upper hand. Most of the precious and semi-precious stones were endowed by popular belief with medicinal or magical virtues; and while our knowledge of those beliefs is derived from the later Greek and Roman authors, there can be no doubt that many of the superstitions are far more ancient than the writers who record them.

The belief in magic is attested even in Homer by the Circe episode in the Odyssey and by the healing of the young Odysseus' wound with the aid of an incantation.[8] In the fifth century allusions to magical acts and objects become quite numerous, and in the fourth there are several allusions to amulets (περίαπτα). What they were made of is unknown; but in many cases animal and vegetable materials may have been their chief ingredients, and of course such amulets would disappear, leaving no trace. On the other hand, we hear of magical rings, which were certainly less perishable. A ring intended to protect the wearer from colic and other digestive ailments is mentioned by the comic poet Antiphanes, who was apparently a contemporary of Demosthenes (fr. 177 Kock):

> οὐ γὰρ κακὸν ἔχω, μηδ' ἔχοιμ· ἐὰν δ' ἄρα
> στρέφῃ με περὶ τὴν γαστέρ' ἢ τὸν ὀμφαλόν,
> παρὰ Φερτάτου δακτύλιος ἔστι μοι δραχμῆς.

"There's nothing wrong with me and I hope there won't be; but if after all I get a twist about the stomach or the navel, I have a ring, bought of Phertatus for a drachma."

[7] Galactite, Orph. Lith. 201 ff.; amethyst, Plin. N. H. 37, 124.

[8] Odyss. 10, 203 ff., 19, 457.

More interesting is a passage in Aristophanes' Plutus, which was presented in 388. The Just Man, threatened by a blackmailer, says (883 f.):

οὐδὲν προτιμῶ σου· φορῶ γὰρ πριάμενος
τὸν δακτύλιον τονδὶ παρ' Εὐδάμου δραχμῆς.

"I don't care a hang for you; I am wearing this ring, bought of Eudamus for a drachma."

Obviously the ring was supposed to have apotropaic power; one may compare the formula often found on amulets of much later times, φύλαξον ἀπὸ παντὸς κακοῦ. But it may have been of some well-known pattern designed specially to protect against the bites of snakes and other vermin, in which case the speech gains point as a slap at the odious character of the blackmailer. An interesting problem is introduced by the next line (885), where the slave Carion puts in the remark, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔνεστι συκοφάντου δήγματος. This should be written ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔνεστι "συκοφάντου δήγματος," and translated, as Fritzsche recommended, "But it is not marked 'for blackmailer-bite.'" [9] Recent critics have rejected this interpretation and have emended the passage in different ways, but I believe that Fritzsche was right; at any rate amulet-inscriptions are known in which the part to be protected is put in the genitive case, and the malady against which protection was desired may well have been indicated in the same way.[10] If this interpretation is correct, the passage gives evidence that amulets inscribed for a specific purpose were known early in the fourth century and probably even in the fifth. Written charms of one sort or another are implied in an allusion to the wearing of Ἐφέσια γραμματα in the fourth century comic poet Anaxilas (Fr. 18 K.):

ἐν σκυταρίοις ῥαπτοῖσι φορῶν
Ἐφεσήια γράμματα καλά.

[9] F. V. Fritzsche, de Socrate veterum comoedorum (Quaestiones Aristophaneae, 216).

[10] Cf. Mouterde, "Le Glaive de Dardanus" (Mélanges de l'Univ. Saint-Joseph, XV, 3 [1930]), 74 f., who publishes a specimen of the common Chnoumis gems with the inscription στομαχου. See De Ridder, Coll. De Clercq, VII (Pierres gravées, 3456; also a chrysoprase in the British Museum (56062), an "Abrasax" stone with an inscr. σφεων, probably to be read ὄφεων.

The σκυτάρια ῥαπτά are little leather amulet-bags to be hung around the neck or shoulders. The *Ephesia grammata* were actually employed in a charm inscribed on a lead tablet found in Crete; it is assigned to the fourth century B.C.[11]

Rings sold for a drachma could hardly have been set with engraved stones; the kind mentioned by Antiphanes and Aristophanes must have been of bronze, upon which even a mediocre craftsman could cut magical designs or inscriptions with a moderate expenditure of time and labor. Gems shown by inscriptions to be magical have not come down to us from classical or even from Hellenistic times; in fact, except for the names of owners and occasionally of artists, which are found even on stones of the archaic period, gem inscriptions belong to the Roman period. Of the 750 that Le Blant publishes, he dates none earlier than the Christian era.[12] Before that time the wearing of magic rings with inscriptions was probably common only among the lower classes of society, whose purses limited them to cheap works of silver, bronze, or iron. Theophrastus related that Pericles showed a friend, who visited him in an illness, an amulet that the women of the household had hung round his neck, intimating that he must be in a bad way to put up with such nonsense as that.[13] The amulet (περίαπτον) may have been a bronze plaque or a small bag containing some of the well-known "similars" supposed to be suited to the sick man's case.

It should be remembered that many earlier gems that are usually considered merely artistic seal-stones may have been amulets also; or at least they may have been worn by the owner with feelings such as we associate with amulet-wearers. We have seen that certain stones were believed, probably from very early times, to possess magical qualities in themselves, and people may well have thought that those powers could be reinforced by carving certain images or symbols upon such

[11] See C. C. McCown in TAPA LIV (1923), 128–140; he edits the Cretan tablet (132–133) and refers to previous publications of it. See also a stone (N5) in the Southesk Collection, which bears on its margin an imperfect version of the formula.

[12] E. Le Blant, 750 Inscriptions de pierres gravées (Mém. Acad. Inscr. XXXVI), p. 12.

[13] Apud Plut. Pericl. 38. 2.

stones. A god who could give his worshippers desirable gifts might appropriately adorn their pendants and rings; here the contact with purely religious ideas is very close. Nowadays one type of Christian may wear the image of a saint in all reverence, experiencing a certain comfort of mind from the constant remembrance of a power beyond himself; to another such an image may become a mere lucky-piece, which, he hopes, may give him an undeserved deliverance from the consequences of his escapades. Just so in Greece one man's ring might be a sincere tribute, through a delicate and beautiful art, to a deity in whom he believed and by whom he hoped to be helped and protected; to another man such a ring might be a talisman and nothing more.[14]

In some instances the presumption that classical ring-stones had a quasi-amuletic value is rather strong. Considering the popularity of athletics in ancient Greece, it is not hard to believe that gems representing vigorous youthful gods or heroes, such as Apollo, Hermes, and Heracles, were worn by athletes to insure their success in the games. In the case of Heracles, who was often invoked as ἀλεξίκακος, "averter of evil," an apotropaic power might be imputed to the stone as well as a positive value in giving strength and endurance. Strong and swift animals might become popular symbols for similar reasons; and if one runs over a series of gems with other than human designs, it is no abuse of the imagination to see a magical meaning in some or many of them.

Even if we allow a potential magical value to Greek gems of the Hellenic and Hellenistic periods, and concede that magical rings made from perishable metals were known in those times, it is undeniable that a marked change took place in the first

[14] Cf. E. Bevan, Holy Images (London, 1940), 177: If in the past the question of images in religion has excited such passion, for and against, that is certainly because they were not thought of as simply a means to bring home to the mind of the worshipper an unseen person, but because the other view of them, as means to act upon the unseen person, or as themselves charged with a quasi-personal supernatural power, was always there in the background.

H. C. Youtie, who read this paper in manuscript, remarks: "The nobler attitude towards religious symbols is illustrated in Apuleius, Apol. 55–56; the vulgar view is exemplified by the ring made of iron nails drawn from crosses (a charm against demons) and by the speaking Apollo carved on a ring-stone (Lucian, Philops. 17 and 38)."

century of the Christian era. Then we begin to find rings and pendants of semi-precious stones which show that they are magical by designs of so peculiar a character as to admit of no other classification, or by the unmistakable evidence of inscriptions. Brief petitions such as διαφύλασσε, "preserve" or δός μοι χάριν, "grant me favor," could be regarded merely as a special development, in a religious direction, of the so-called motto or posy inscriptions which make their appearance in this period, and which are sometimes of amuletic character. They are expressions of good will, wishes for luck, health, or long life; many have been published by Le Blant and others.[15] But the striking change just mentioned is really a transition, as Wünsch expressed it, from an older national magic to a later international magic.[16] It shows itself in longer inscriptions containing invocations to non-Greek deities, often accompanied by words that are sometimes corruptions of Egyptian, Hebrew, or Aramaic speech-forms, sometimes entirely unintelligible combinations of letters. In some instances words seem to have been invented chiefly to produce a jingling sound; in others the object may have been to impress the hearer or reader by their obscurity. Yet it would be wrong to assume that cynical knavery accounts for all such language. Even meaningless formulas were probably believed to have power in themselves.

Such inscriptions are usually, but not always, accompanied by incised figures of various deities, sometimes the well-known gods of Greece in slightly Egyptianized forms, sometimes Egyptian gods more or less Hellenized in appearance, sometimes unfamiliar divine or demonic forms, Among the last are certain monstrous combinations of human and animal elements, symbolizing a fusion of various supernatural beings. These amuletic demons often occur without inscriptions; in such cases the wearer of the design was probably content with the general protection it gave him, and dispensed with the written charm or prayer.

In a passage that has often been brought to the attention of archaeologists the elder Pliny says: "Now, indeed, men also

[15] Le Blant, op. cit., 19–46.

[16] R. Wünsch, "Deisidaimoniaka," ARW XII, 19.

are beginning to wear on their fingers Harpocrates and figures of Egyptian deities." [17] The words *viri quoque* seem to imply that women had adopted the custom even earlier, and it is probable that rings of the sort described began to appear in Rome shortly after the conquest of Egypt, a century before the time when Pliny wrote. Egyptian custom, in fact, was the chief formative influence in amulets of the "Gnostic" type. Amulets of specialized form, recognizable as such and serving no other purpose, had been made from durable materials in Egypt for many centuries, and have been preserved in large numbers. They are an important part of the material of Egyptian archaeology and have been described and discussed by many authorities.[18] On the other hand, among genuine Hellenic remains we can point to nothing of the kind with certainty. There is little doubt, however, that superstitious Greeks used simple amulets made of perishable materials, and as we have seen, a quasi-amuletic quality may have been ascribed to certain gemstones, especially when they bore designs or symbols with which the common people associated ideas of power, wealth, strength, or beauty.

In an important paper published in 1934, Max Pieper showed that even in Ptolemaic Egypt Greek gem-seals were substituted for scarabs in attesting signatures to legal documents; this seems to have come about chiefly because exact duplicates are common among the scarabs, while no two Greek seals are exactly alike.[19] Thus scarabs, which were used both as seals and as amulets, gradually disappear, and it may be that other old types of amulets fell into disuse along with the scarabs, all the more easily because the original meaning of some of them was forgotten. Strong as was the influence of Egypt upon the conquering people, Graeco-Egyptian amulets did not, as a rule, take over the shapes of dynastic amulets. This can scarcely have been because of their funerary associations, since the amulets used in daily life were probably much the same as those de-

[17] Plin, N. H., 33. 41.

[18] E. A. W. Budge, Amulets and Superstitions (Oxford and London, 1930), 133–150; Flinders Petrie, Amulets, 24, Pl. 6–11.

[19] M. Pieper "Die Siegelung in den griech. Papyri Aegyptens" (Aegyptus, XIV, 1934, 245–252).

posited with the dead. As far as I know, such shapes as the *ṭeṭ* (so-called spine of Osiris), *udjat* (eye), *nefer*, etc., were not imitated by the makers of Graeco-Egyptian amulets. It is true, however, that some of the old amulets appear as parts of the intaglio designs on the "Gnostic" stones: the *ankh* is seen in the hands of divinities, the scarabaeus beetle occurs frequently, sometimes as the main design, and there is an interesting example of an *udjat* carved on a Graeco-Egyptian gem.[20] Further, the heart continues in the form of a common digestive amulet, but its actual shape is different from that of the *ab*, the Egyptian heart-amulet.[21]

The impact of Egypt is shown in two ways. First, Egyptian deities and demons, also certain symbols like the scarabaeus beetle, were represented upon ring-stones and pendants which were generally of the normal Greek form; and second, the practice of accompanying the design with a brief inscribed prayer or incantation is carried over to the so-called Gnostic amulets. In early dynastic times huge heart-scarabs were inscribed with a prayer-spell from the Book of the Dead; and from the Saite period on, the combination of divine and demonic figures with incantations is well illustrated in the stelae of Horus,[22] which have influenced the form of some Graeco-Egyptian amulets, and have bequeathed to them a very common demonic type, the compound pantheistic being sometimes called the pantheistic Bes.

Palestinian and Babylonian influences manifest themselves in certain divine names and in the occasional appearance of astrological symbols. It is probable that amuletic devices appear on Babylonian and Assyrian seal-cylinders, and one might look to Babylon for an influence as powerful as the Egyptian.[23] But the predominance of Egyptian over all other non-Greek elements is abundantly proved not only by the close relation that exists between papyrus amulets and magical gems, but even more by the longer magical papyri, really handbooks of

[20] M. Pieper, Die Abraxasgemmen (Mitteilungen des deutschen Instituts für ägypt. Altertumskunde in Kairo V (1934), 141 (Berlin 9792), and Pl. 22, b.

[21] Budge, Amulets and Superstitions, 138.

[22] Budge, op. cit. 165–171.

[23] H. Frankfort, Cylinder Seals, 175, 200–203.

magic, which virtually offer us commentaries upon certain designs and inscriptions found on the stones.

Bearing these points in mind, we may now recapitulate the principal characteristics of Graeco-Egyptian magical amulets. They are of such sizes as could be comfortably worn as pendants, ring-stones, or beads, and are usually intaglios cut in various stones, most commonly of the semi-precious kinds though sometimes of no intrinsic value. The commonest materials are jasper (green, red, and yellow in about that order of frequency),[24] haematite, chalcedony, lapis lazuli, rock-crystal, carnelian, agate, plasma, obsidian, and steatite; and some of these stones were preferred for one design, others for another. The more valuable gem-stones are not common in this class of objects. Metal seems to have been less commonly used for amulets in Graeco-Roman Egypt; but it must be remembered that artifacts made of the baser metals are soon destroyed by wear and corrosion unless kept under favorable conditions, and that charms made of silver and gold might, after a time, be melted down for their value as bullion. In a tract incorporated in the Paris magical papyrus (PGM IV, 256 ff.) there are directions for making a φυλακτήριον, which is a thin silver plate (λεπίς) upon which a sacred name containing a hundred letters is to be inscribed with a bronze stylus; the amulet is to be worn on a thong of asses' hide.[25] Artemidorus (5, 26) tells of a man who dreamed that he was wearing around his neck, like an amulet-case (σκυτίς), the name of Sarapis cut upon a bronze plate (λεπίς).[26] The dream evidently reflects a perfectly natural situation, and is related, not for its strangeness, but because of

[24] Pliny (N. H. 37. 118) says of the jaspers, *totus vero oriens pro amuleto gestare eas traditur*. But he seems not to know of the yellow kind, and it is not certain that we know what he means by *iaspis*. Dioscurides (de mat. medica 5. 142) also does not mention red jasper, but says that all kinds are used as amulets, and particularly that when attached to the thigh, they were believed to shorten the pains of childbirth.

[25] PGM IV, 256–260. In Studies in Honor of E. K. Rand, 246, D. M. Robinson gives a useful bibliography of gold and silver lamellae in connection with his publication of a silver tablet which was rolled up in a bronze tube.

[26] In LSJ σκυτίς is translated "leather amulet"; but it is doubtful whether amulets were made of leather, and "amulet-bag" or "amulet-case" would be more accurate. In popular speech the container might be carelessly used for the contained. Cf. Jul. Afric. 7. 17, p. 39 (ed. Vieillefond).

its meaning as interpreted in the system of Artemidorus. In Palestine and Syria many bronze amulet-pendants have been found in a fair state of preservation, and some of them are in perfect condition, probably because they were treasured down to our own times. They are made in a distinctive form, sometimes spade-shaped, sometimes leaf-shaped, and a suspension-loop at the top is cast or wrought as an integral part of the piece.[27]

The shapes of most amulets differ little from those used for the later Greek and Hellenistic non-magical gems. Rectangular pendants are perhaps more common than in earlier periods, and in this we may see the influence of Egypt, because of the frequent use there of a stela form for magical designs and inscriptions.[28] In general, pendants were mounted in gold or some other metal, and the suspension loop was part of the mounting; but some heart-shaped digestive amulets have a projection at the top, perforated for a cord. Holes drilled within the field of a gem are often of modern origin. Ringstones are usually oval, sometimes circular or octagonal. Beads sometimes occur among objects of this class; they are usually elongated rectangular prisms, occasionally small cubes or fusiform. Unusual shapes are to be seen here and there. In the British Museum there is a lapis lazuli scarab with extended wings, a form taken over from dynastic amulets, and two pieces with triangular outline, the corners rounded.[29] The University of Michigan has a fine gray-blue chalcedony (26020), a Chnoubis amulet, the ovate outline and unusual thickness of which show that it was meant to resemble the stone of a peach or a persea-fruit. A few prehistoric stone axes (celts) have been found inscribed, at a much later date, with magical symbols and inscriptions.[30] The

[27] Some specimens of this form were published by Schlumberger, Rev. des Études Grecques V (1892), 80–84; also by Perdrizet in the same review, XVI, 49. A Hebrew amulet from Palestine is of similar form, but the material is silver; cf. Budge, Amulets and Superstitions, p. 237.

[28] Rectangular stone amulets with a projection at the top (for hanging) were also made in Babylonia in the time of Esarhaddon (ca. 680 B.C.); see Budge, Amulets and Superstitions, 92–98, with Plates 12–13.

[29] B. M. 56277, 56001, 56024.

[30] To the examples cited and figured by Cook, Zeus II, 512 f., add the remarkable celt

amulet-makers undoubtedly regarded these "thunder-stones" as possessing magical powers in themselves, and added their own magic to that of the ancient weapon.

With some noteworthy exceptions the figures shown on magical amulets are crudely designed, and the execution is often hasty and careless. Much of the work seems to have been done with the wheel, and not infrequently it is marred by cuts that have run slightly beyond the proper outlines of the design. One who takes up the study of these objects after learning something of the glyptic art of the classical period will observe an important difference in their plan; the designs are meant to be looked at on the stone itself, not in an impression. They are not cut for seals; consequently the relations of right and left, e.g., as to objects carried in the hands of a god, are as they appear on the stone, and the inscriptions read from left to right. Exceptions to this practice are rare. For this reason illustrations of Graeco-Egyptian amulets should be made from casts of the stones, not from impressions. Neglect of this point has made it needlessly inconvenient to read the inscriptions on gems published in many of the older books.

The inscriptions require a fuller treatment than can be entered upon here, but some preliminary comments are in order. There are brief pious exclamations, like εἷς Θεὸς Σάραπις, "one God, Sarapis," or νικᾷ ἡ Ἶσις, "Isis conquers," and brief prayers like the common "grant favor" or "protect the wearer from all harm." There are occasionally phrases, sentences, or even invocations of some length, that show genuine religious feeling. A few amulets have a peculiarity that has not received proper attention. In addition to some design and inscription of the usual kind, intended to further and protect the wearer's general welfare, these pieces include a petition concerned with his relations to other people; and some of the desires thus recorded are

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in the Royal Ontario Museum at Toronto (published by J. H. Iliffe, AJA XXXV, 304–309); also B. M. +2402, which is still, I think, unpublished. It is labelled "Prehistoric stone celt used in later Greek times as an amulet; an invocation to Bacchus is carved on the base." I examined it in 1937, but found the inscription unintelligible. The invocation to Bacchus consists of the word BAKXE alone; the remainder makes no sense.

distinctly anti-social. Such stones contradict Budge's view that "the use of the amulet . . . has never been, and can never be, connected with what is commonly called 'Black Magic.'" [31] It is doubtless true that the magic of amulets is usually "white" rather than "black," yet there are Graeco-Egyptian amulets that express such wishes as might be scratched on a curse-tablet (κατάδεσμος, *defixionis tabella*). Yet the true curse-tablet, made for the sole purpose of destroying an enemy, is never worn by the person uttering the curse, but is hidden away or buried. When "black-magical" words are inscribed on a gem-stone it may mean that the stone was intended to be used in a ceremony (πρᾶξις) directed against an enemy, or that the inscription represents a desire so passionately felt that the person who expresses it wishes to be constantly reminded of it.

A special problem is presented by the very numerous inscriptions which, though written in Greek letters, are not Greek; they are usually unintelligible jargon, though some Egyptian and Semitic words have been recognized. Certain words recur in connection with particular designs often enough to suggest that they are secret names of the god or demon represented or symbolized on the stone. These recurring names should be recorded, and the accompanying images or symbols noted, in the hope that some light may eventually be thrown upon their origin. Among them are Αρωριφρασις in connection with Aphrodite, Ηναμαρω with designs representing the baboon of Thoth, Κρατουαθ with Horus-Harpocrates. In the last example we may perhaps recognize an element in the name Harpocrates.

Other long words or combinations of words are found on both magical gems and magical papyri, and several passages in the papyri indicate that these jargon words constitute the "great" or "secret" name of the god invoked. Nevertheless, I am convinced that most of them have no meaning in any language. Some are meant to impress by their sonorous syllables and their suggestion of foreign speech, which is helped out by borrowed sound-elements characteristic of other tongues. Others are mere babbling sequences of similar sounds, like αθθα βαθθα, ιβι αβι σελτι βελτι, and are comparable in their meaningless jingle to

[31] Budge, Amulets and Superstitions, Preface, xxiii.

some of the "counting-out" rhymes used by children in their games. The dubious character of this jargon did not escape such ancient critics as Jerome, who fathers much of this magical nonsense upon the Basilidians, probably unjustly.

> . . . Armazel, Barbelon, Abraxan, Balsamum et ridiculum Leusiboram ceteraque magis portenta quam nomina, quae ad imperitorum et muliercularum animos concitandas, quasi de Hebraicis fontibus hauriunt, barbaro simplices quosque terrentes sono, ut quod non intelligunt plus mirentur.[32]
>
> To stir up the minds of ignorant men and foolish women, they pretend to draw from Hebrew sources Armazel, Barbelo, Abraxas, Balsamus and the absurd Leusiboras, and other monsters rather than names, terrifying simple folk with barbarous sounds, that they may be the more amazed at what they cannot understand.

There was a magic power even in the arrangement of the letters in certain words. Palindromes, words that read the same forwards and backwards, were sometimes inscribed on gem-amulets; the commonest of these is αβλαναθαναλβα, but there are several longer ones. Even the seven Greek vowels, which were commonly interpreted as symbols of the seven planets, were used as elements in magical charms, particularly when they were arranged in certain ways. Some words or groups of words had isopsephic value; that is to say, that when each letter is given the value that belongs to it as a Greek numeral (α = 1, β = 2, ι = 10, ρ = 100), the sum of these numerical values equals a number of magical import, such as 365, 3663, 9999. Some inscriptions that seem meaningless at first glance prove upon examination to be mere childish attempts to disguise familiar names. Thus a two-line inscription IMX|HAΛ is merely the name of the archangel Michael with the letters pied;[33] ΛΒΩ|ΧΩΝ|ΙΩΧ is the demonic name Βαινχωωωχ. Somewhat similar is a sort of anagram inscribed on a gem in the Lewis

[32] Hier. Epist. 75. 3. 1 (CSEL LV).

[33] J. Chiflet, tab. 16, 67 (following J. Macarii Abraxas seu Apistopistus), Antuerpiae 1657; B. M. 56054.

collection A|I|ΣAB|OΩN|EΘH|Y.[34] Here, it would seem, each letter was meant to be used, not once only, but as often as it might be necessary in order to make certain words. The editor, J. H. Middleton, saw that one could read ὁ ὤν, Σαβαωθ, θεός; we may add Ιαω, and since the presence of η and υ is not otherwise accounted for, it is likely that the sequence of the seven vowels αεηιουω was part of the plan. I would arrange it thus: Ιαω Σαβαωθ, ὁ ὢν θεός, αεηιουω. This particular device has escaped the notice of most observers, and it may explain other apparently meaningless groups of letters that appear on gem-amulets. Further, we must not forget that significant mottoes and religious pass-words were indicated by the initial letters of their words; the Christian symbols ΙΧΘΥΣ and ΧΜΓ are well known, but obscure religious groups may have concealed their watchwords behind other combinations of initial letters that are meaningless to us.

Besides inscriptions that are legible, even though meaningless, many amulets bear inscribed signs that belong to no known alphabet. They are also drawn in some of the magical papyri, which call them χαρακτῆρες, and the term *characters*, in a special limited sense, has been adopted by archaeologists in referring to these signs.[35] Some of them may be adapted from Egyptian hieroglyphs, others remind one slightly of some signs in the Cypriote syllabary, but most of them present no likeness to any known system of writing; and the resemblances to hieroglyphs have shed no light upon the meaning of the characters. It is most likely that they are ideographic symbols for sacred names or magical terms, rather than alphabetic signs, and it is significant that in inscriptions the characters are sometimes addressed as if they were sentient beings. Some characters, however, differ from the Greek alphabet just enough to suggest that they may have been borrowed from some system of cryptography; we know that several systems of the kind were in use.

It is possible that we may yet learn something about the characters if some investigator is patient enough to follow up

[34] J. H. Middleton, The Lewis Collection of Gems and Rings, p. 80 (Class B, 20).

[35] There are many examples in P. London 121 (PGM VII) as at 196, 392, 399, 589, etc.

all the leads, but at present they are still undeciphered. Even if, as is likely, they represented something definite to those who invented them, there is little doubt that they were ignorantly imitated and repeated by later and less learned operators, in whose hands they became mere hocus-pocus.

The crowded appearance of the work on many magical stones is very noticeable. A single figure may be surrounded by an inscription of many letters, or the field may be dotted with characters; and sometimes groups of several divinities or demonic creatures are forced into a surprisingly small space. Even when the obverse of such stones shows only a single figure in an adequate field, the reverse will often contain an inscription running into several scores of minute letters; and since it is evident that some of these stones were set in rings, the inscription, being invisible, was the wearer's secret, and hence exerted greater magical power. Even the beveled edges of some ring-stones and pendants had magical words carved upon them; and these were completely hidden by the setting of the stone.

The lettering is in general of a kind known from the second century on, with much greater use of rectilinear letter forms, because of the difficulty of cutting curves on the hard stone; but the lapidary's indifference to certain distinctions gives some trouble to the reader. The cross stroke of A is omitted so often that Λ may often be interpreted as A, and A and Δ are not always carefully distinguished from each other. Neglect of the middle stroke of E causes it to be confused with the square sigma (Ϲ). Theta is usually lozenge-shaped, and when the cross-stroke is slighted, as is often done, it may be mistaken for omicron; when it is square, omission or shallow cutting of the right-hand upright may cause it to be read as E. K and B are sometimes almost undistinguishable, and one may hesitate between Γ and T. Xi is regularly like zeta with a short stroke across the diagonal, and since this is often neglected or lightly scratched, the two letters may be confused. Failure on the part of editors to take account of such epigraphic laxities makes it necessary to correct the readings of many inscriptions, particularly those published by the early students of these objects.

Although the workmanship of Graeco-Egyptian amulets is

far inferior to that of classical and Hellenistic gems, they were not always cheaply executed. Occasionally the more valuable stones were used, and the work, even on the cheaper materials, must have been expensive. Some of the designs show several figures carefully differentiated by costume or attributes. There are long inscriptions, some of which must have been copied from written directions, since different gems show them, with only slight variations; and even rude cutting of an inscription running to a hundred letters or more would cost many hours of labor. The expense of making the more elaborate amulets shows clearly how important a part magic had come to play in the lives of the wealthier classes; and the remarkable pieces of magical apparatus found at Pergamon, adorned with carefully executed symbols and inscriptions, as well as with the three forms of Hecate, prove that a master magician here and there could afford expensive working-tools.[36] On the other hand unscrupulous amulet-makers undoubtedly scamped their work; they carved figures of deities that were barely recognizable, and some jumbled inscriptions are probably to be laid to their charge. Some stones puzzle the archaeologist because the lapidary was an impostor who cut designs and inscriptions at haphazard; and men and women bought such work because they were so gullible as to be satisfied, perhaps to be even more impressed, by the lack of meaning in figures and text.

Further evidence that many amulets required careful technical preparation is supplied by certain texts which mention a process of consecration (τελετή, ἀποτέλεσμα, καθιέρωσις) as necessary to give a stone its full efficacy. In some of these passages it would seem that the mere carving of an appropriate design and inscription constituted a τελετή which gave full effect to the powers latent in the unwrought stone. Thus in the treatise περὶ λίθων ascribed to Socrates and Dionysius we read of the jacinth (ὑάκινθος): γλύφεται ἐν τούτῳ τῷ λίθῳ Ποσειδῶν ἔχων δελφῖνα τῷ δεξιῷ ποδὶ καὶ τρίαιναν τῇ δεξιᾷ χειρί. τελέσας οὖν οὕτως ἔχε φορῶν τὸ δακτύλιον, καὶ ποιεῖ πάντα ὅσα ὁ σμάραγδος.[37] The text

[36] See R. Wünsch, Antikes Zaubergerät aus Pergamon (Jahrb. deutsch. arch. Inst., Ergänzungsheft VI), 1905.

[37] Mély-Ruelle, Les Lapidaires de l'antiquité, II (Les lapidaires grecs), p. 175.

goes on to say that such a stone will save the wearer from shipwreck. Attention may be called to the fact that no inscription is required, and that the design of Poseidon resting his foot upon a dolphin and holding a trident in his hand is very like some gems that have been classed merely as ornaments or seals; consequently this passage confirms the view expressed above, that certain gems that bear no indication of a magical character may nevertheless have been worn as amulets. Other examples of a "consecration" that consists only in the cutting of a design, or a design with an inscription, are to be found in the Epitome of the Orphic *Lithika*.[38]

On the other hand, the magical papyri sometimes give directions for a ceremony of consecration, after the object has received its design and inscription, which involves some or all of the following preliminaries: sacrifice, libations, censing, recitation of special formulas (λόγοι), and previous purification and continence. So, for example, the iron plate inscribed with Homeric verses, and the "Ring of Hermes," an emerald with a scarab cut on one side and a figure of Isis on the under side, the scarab to be pierced and strung on a golden wire.[39] In the account of the πρᾶξις called the "Sword of Dardanus," a special incense that seems to have been used in the consecration is spoken of as "animating" (ἐμψυχοῦν) an image of Eros,[40] which is an important part of the prescribed design, and the whole πρᾶξις; a curious idea, which requires some further comment.

Little is known about the consecration of divine images in the classical period of Greek history. Some of the most revered cult images were very ancient, and the circumstances of their establishment are lost in antiquity. Yet we may be sure that when such a statue as that of Zeus at Olympia or Athena in the Parthenon was set in its place, the occasion did not pass unmarked by some special ceremony. Such evidence as could be assembled by Hock, the chief authority on the subject, indicates that the consecration, more correctly called installation, consisted principally in the adornment of the statue and perhaps

[38] Mély-Ruelle, op. cit., p. 162, 13, p. 168, 12.
[39] PGM IV, 2145–2241; V, 213–300.
[40] PGM IV, 1830.

the attachment of certain symbols to it, such as *tainiai* or *stemmata*, and in the performance of the first sacrifice in the presence of the image.[41] The sacrifice, of course, implies that the god is invited to come and accept the gifts that his worshippers have provided. There might well be a procession accompanied by hymns and prayers; such details would vary with the importance of the occasion. But there seems to be nothing to show that the officiating priests performed any rite to compel the deity to take up his abode in the statue and give it power and life. Yet the late philosophers of the Neo-Platonic school clearly knew of actions which were believed to animate images of the gods and endow them with power and motion. The passages illustrating this department of theurgy have been assembled by Hock and Hopfner.[42] Full treatment of the subject is neither feasible nor appropriate here, but I cite a few passages that state the idea concisely; they are drawn from Hopfner's collections, except the one from Hermias.

Proclus in Timaeum (37c–d), marg. pag. 240A (Vol. III, 6, ll. 8–15 Kroll): *καὶ πάλιν ἐκ τούτου δῆλον, ὅπως τὸν δημιουργὸν κατὰ τοὺς ἄκρους ἱδρύει τῶν τελεστῶν, ἀγαλματοποιὸν αὐτὸν ἀποφαίνων τοῦ κόσμου, καθάπερ ἔμπροσθεν ὀνομάτων ποιητὴν θείων καὶ χαρακτήρων θείων ἐκφαντικόν, δι' ὧν τὴν ψυχὴν ἐτέλεσε· ταῦτα γὰρ καὶ οἱ τῷ ὄντι τελεσταὶ δρῶσι, διὰ χαρακτήρων καὶ ὀνομάτων ζωτικῶν τελοῦντες τὰ ἀγάλματα καὶ ζῶντα καὶ κινούμενα ἀποτελοῦντες.*

Idem in Rempublicam (616c Vol. II, 212 Kr.): *. . . κατὰ τὸν Τίμαιον* (37c) *ἄγαλμα τῶν ἀϊδίων ἐστὶν θεῶν ὅδε ὁ κόσμος, τελεστὴν μὲν εἶναι τοῦ ἀγάλματος τούτου τὸν δημιουργόν, ὃς ἔπνευσεν εἰς αὐτὸν ζωὴν ἀμήχανον ὅσην καὶ ἐποίησεν ἄγαλμα ἔννουν χρηματίζον διὰ τῆς αὐτοῦ κινήσεως τοῖς ὁρᾶν δυναμένοις καὶ διὰ τῶν ἐν οὐρανῷ σημείων τὰ ἐσόμενα λέγον· τῷ δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς χαρακτῆρι καὶ ταῖς περιφοραῖς, αἷς ὀνόματα αὐτὸς ἔθηκεν, περιέλαβεν αὐτὸ καὶ συνέδησεν· φυλακτήρια δὲ αὐτῷ περιῆψεν καὶ ἐν μέσοις ἥδρασεν τοῖς κόλποις τοὺς εἰρημένους νόας, κτλ.*

Here it is clear that Proclus thought of the officiating con-

[41] G. Hock, Griechische Weihegebräuche (1905), 49–52; see also E. Bevan, Holy Images (1940), 31–35.

[42] Hock, op. cit., 65–70; Th. Hopfner, Griechisch-ägyptischer Offenbarungszauber, I, § 808–812.

secrator, to whom the Demiurge is compared, as inscribing characters upon the image and hanging amulets upon it.

Hermias Alex., Schol. in Plat. Phaedrum, ed. Couvreur, p. 87, 4 ff.: *πῶς μὲν οὖν ἡ ψυχὴ ἐνθουσιᾷ εἴρηται. πῶς δὲ καὶ ἄγαλμα λέγεται ἐνθουσιᾷν; ἢ αὐτὸ μὲν οὐκ ἐνεργεῖ περὶ τὸ θεῖον, ὅ γε ἄψυχόν ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ τὴν ὕλην ἡ τελεστικὴ διακαθήρασα καί τινας χαρακτῆρας καὶ σύμβολα περιθεῖσα τῷ ἀγάλματι, πρῶτον μὲν ἔμψυχον αὐτὸ διὰ τούτων ἐποίησε καὶ ⟨οἷον τε⟩ ζωήν τινα ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου καταδέξασθαι, ἔπειτα μετὰ τοῦτο ἐλλαμφθῆναι παρὰ τοῦ θείου αὐτὸ παρεσκεύασεν.*

In a curious passage (De Myst. 3. 13), Iamblichus censures those who think that by merely "standing on characters" (probably drawn on the ground), they can dispense with the other theurgic arts, and none the less *εἰσκρίνειν τι πνεῦμα*, "command the presence of a spirit."

In accepting the idea that an image could be given life by theurgic processes, the Neo-Platonists were merely attempting to give a philosophical reason for a custom that was far older than their school, just as their doctrine of substances, persons, animals, and symbols sympathetic or antipathetic to particular divinities is merely a rationalizing of ancient popular beliefs about the magical qualities of things in the natural world.

It is certainly possible that in early days Greece had installation ceremonies involving the ritual animation of statues; but if so, no evidence for such ceremonies has come down to us. The nearest approach to ritual animation is the annual cleansing of certain cult-statues.[43] This may be viewed simply as a practical process, like an annual house-cleaning, and with his usual sobriety of judgment, M. P. Nilsson so interprets it; but it is possible that the rite was performed with the purpose of giving renewed life and power to the image. Yet on the whole it is likely that the idea of ritual empsychosis came into magic and theurgy from Egyptian religious custom. Hopfner and Nock have rightly drawn attention to this point, and I owe to them the knowledge of Moret's work Le rituel du culte divin journalier, which shows that the king as priest was believed to give life to the statue of the god.[44] The passage cited above from

[43] Hock, op. cit. 83.

[44] Hopfner, op. cit., I, § 808 ad fin. (p. 217); Nock, JEA XI (1925), 155. Moret's

Proclus on the Republic implies that phylacteries were attached to the image as part of the theurgic peocess of vivifying it. This also indicates Egyptian influence; for as Naville says, in Egypt magic was as necessary to gods as to men.[45] Ancient sculptures and paintings show the gods carrying the ankh and other amulets, and late Graeco-Egyptian statuettes wear them.[46]

These rites of consecration doubtless help us to understand the cultural background that produced magical amulets, but they are of little or no importance for the interpretation of individual objects. The elaborate procedure described in some passages of the magical papyri seems to have been required in the case of stones meant to be used in an important πρᾶξις; and it is a reasonable conjecture that some elaborate amulets that have come down to us once played a part in a ceremony of more than ordinary importance. It is interesting to recall here that a stone has been published which answers closely to the design prescribed in the "Sword of Dardanus." [47] On the other hand, makers and vendors of amulets probably resembled their modern successors in exaggerating, or simply inventing, the elaborate precautions taken to insure the efficacy of their wares. It is impossible to believe that the thousands of magical gems and metal objects that are extant were all prepared with preliminary asceticism and elaborate sacrifices. Besides, we have already seen that in some authorities the "consecration" consists merely in the carving of a divine figure or symbol with or without an inscription.

A word may be said of methods of research in this field. No preparation for the study of Graeco-Egyptian amulets is more

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work was published in Annales du Musée Guimet, Bibliothèque des Études, XIV (1902) 79–102; note esp. 93–94.

[45] Hastings, Encycl. of Religion and Ethics, III, 431a.

[46] See Budge, Gods of the Egyptians, I, 430 (Hathor); plate opposite 456 (Child Horus); II, 130 and plate opposite (Osiris); 210 (Child Horus); 286 (Bes); Lanzone, Dizionario di Mitologia Egizia, pl. cxxii, i (Merut); Perdrizet, Les terres cuites . . . de la collection Fouquet, pl. III, XV; Breccia, Terrecotte figurate del Museo di Alessandria, nos. 11, 152, 157.

[47] Mouterde, Le glaive de Dardanos (Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph, XV) 53–64.

important than clearing one's mind of certain longstanding misconceptions. First and perhaps most important among these is the notion that the designs inscribed upon them partly reveal, partly conceal a body of mysterious occult doctrine, and that they affirm the devotion of the wearer to a religious system symbolized by images, characters, and significant names. In fact a prepossession in favor of the occult has been the principal obstacle to a better understanding of these interesting objects. Religious influences do indeed manifest themselves in many ways, and there is some ostentation of mystery, because wherever there is magic there is secrecy. But the connections between the designs and inscriptions and the doctrines of any contemporary religion are too tenuous to justify us in accepting these amulets as important documents of religious history. A few here and there may be viewed in that light; in the great majority of examples we cannot definitely prove that the wearer of the amulet was a follower of the religion that might seem to be indicated by his pendant or ring. In that age of syncretism interest in extraneous doctrines and cults was very active, and it worked effectively with the well-known tendency of believers in magic to regard *omne ignotum pro mirifico*. Not every person who wore a ring engraved with the words Iao Sabaoth was a Jew, not every pendant with a figure of Aphrodite arranging her hair was worn by a Greek woman, not every stone inscribed Abrasax belonged to a member of a Gnostic sect. To state these facts may lessen the interest in these amulets that a student of religion might otherwise feel, but it at least contributes something to our understanding of the muddled magic prevalent in the early centuries of our era.

Another misconception is that a classification can be worked out into which all amulets of this period can be fitted. In a rough way we can distinguish certain types characterized by similar designs and legends; but the number of amulets that conform closely to such types is small as compared with specimens that vary from the standard or combine features belonging to two or more types. The disposition to combine sometimes goes very far. In the remarkable bronze heart belonging to the Petrie Collection in University College, London, it

would seem that the maker tried to bring together, in a sort of omnibus amulet, all the magical designs and formulas that he knew.[48] We also have to reckon with a behavior like that of the makers and the users of patent medicines. Until they were restrained by law, the less scrupulous manufacturers of these nostrums were wont to claim for their products many virtues besides the one, itself dubious, which the chemical ingredients might seem to indicate; and ignorant patients will use their favorite patent preparation for many other ailments than the one it was intended to cure. They will even take liberties with a legitimate prescription given by a qualified physican. Now we find in the magical papyri various charms for which miscellaneous powers are claimed; in the first three lines of P. Mich. III, 154, a brief formula is described as giving favor, victory, and protection, and reversing spells. A similar criss-crossing of designs and their supposed powers is found in the gem-amulets. Delatte has shown convincingly that a certain design known to earlier students as the "Mystic Vase" is in reality a stylized representation of the uterus, intended to cure maladies affecting that organ.[49] Yet a specimen of this type in my own collection is inscribed on the reverse ἐπὶ ποδία; the diminutive, by the way, is of some lexicographical interest.

A more important source of confusion is the variation in magical practice as taught by different masters, or as applied by different lapidaries. One example of this is so striking that it is worth citing at some length. In one of the Berlin magical papyri (PGM I, 143 ff.), immediately after a long λόγος consisting of many magical words and addressed to the sun, there follow these directions. "The image (ἀνδριάς) engraved on the stone is a lion-faced Heliorus holding in his left hand an orb (πόλος) and ⟨in the right⟩ a whip, and round about him an ouroboros (i.e., a serpent with his tail in his mouth), and under the bottom of the stone this name (keep it secret): acha achacha chach charchara chach."

The words "in the right" (τῇ δεξιᾷ) were added by Nock, and the supplement is certainly correct. The word translated

[48] Petrie, Amulets, no. 135 aa; p. 30 f., Pl. 22 and 49.

[49] A. Delatte, in Musée Belge, XVIII, 75–88.

"bottom" is ἔδαφος, which leaves us a little in doubt whether the legend was to be placed on the reverse of the stone or under the ground-line of the design, i.e. in the exergue; the fact that τοῦ λίθου follows ἔδαφος rather favors the former alternative. Heliorus (Ἡλίωρος) is Preisendanz's reading; the papyrus shows only ωρος preceded by a sign which Preisendanz interprets as a corrupt symbol of the sun. Even if this point be called into question, Horus must stand as against the conjectures of other editors because of the solar relations of this deity, and perhaps also because the first of the prescribed magical words is found elsewhere in connection with Horus.

Now I know of five amulets, and have minutely examined four of the five, which have for their principal design a lion-headed figure holding a whip in the right hand and an orb in the left, corresponding exactly to the description in the Berlin papyrus.[50] They differ from it only in certain particulars that have nothing to do with the principal design, as follows. First, all five are cut on rock-crystal, while the design in the papyrus is to be cut on a stone which will be brought to the operator by a hawk (! cf. l. 65). One may infer that it is the so-called ἱερακίτης, which seems to be unidentified; from Pliny N. H. 37, 167, it would seem to have been colored like a hawk's plumage. Further, the papyrus directs that the design shall be encircled by an ouroboros; but this motif, which is extremely common on flat stones, would have been ineffective on the crystals, all of which are cut *en cabochon*, and it does not appear on them. Finally all five bear inscriptions that agree closely, not taking into account personal petitions that are added on two of them, and all differ entirely from the inscription that the papyrus calls for; and while they are in part unintelligible jargon, the first two words in all five are Ζεθ ἄφοβε. The "fearless Zeth" thus invoked must be the wicked god Set, the enemy of Osiris, Isis, and Horus. Thus one and the same design seems to have been used to represent either of two mutually hostile deities, and we

[50] The stones are as follows: British Museum 56502; Cabinet des Médailles (Chabouillet 2171); Boston Museum of Fine Arts 01.7556; a stone in the collection of the late E. T. Newell; and one in the possession of President A. G. Ruthven, of the University of Michigan.

are naturally led to suppose that it was used by two different religious groups. Either similar images were differently interpreted by different schools, or else syncretism had progressed so far that no distinctions counted.

There is further evidence of a negative kind showing that there was no authoritative system which determined the characteristics of these amulets, but rather that various magical practitioners, working with motifs that were widely known, made their prescriptions according to their own notions. Our magical papyri are made up of procedures and formulas supposed to be the work of various masters of magic, and it might therefore be expected that such directions as they give for the execution of gem-amulets would be carried out on many extant stones. But close agreement of this kind is very unusual; the design prescribed in the "Sword of Dardanus," and recognized by Mouterde on a haematite found in Syria, is a remarkable exception.[51] Single motifs mentioned in the papyri are common — the ouroboros, Hecate, the lion treading on a mummy, etc.; but the papyri usually add further details that are not illustrated by the stones. Representations of Sarapis are very numerous; but I have not seen one in which the sceptre of the god is topped with an ibis, as prescribed in PGM V, 449. The combination of a scarabaeus on one side of a gem and Isis on the other (PGM V, 239 ff.) might be expected to appear even fortuitously, in view of the common occurrence of the two separate motifs; yet I have not seen them combined just as the papyrus requires. One of the unexplained points in the interrelation of magical books and amulets is the fact that the cock-headed demon with snake legs, who is represented on hundreds of stones, is not described in extant papyri, though the names that accompany him, Iao and Abrasax, occur there numberless times.

These, then are some of the considerations that warn us not to expect systematic regularity in amulets which may represent many different methods of magic, and which, furthermore, may have been made, or modified, by gem-cutters to suit the whims

[51] See n. 47 above.

of the purchasers. Yet there is reason to hope that we may yet learn much by following scientific methods.

The first need is that the student should see and remember as many of these objects as possible, that he should recognize and bring together into groups all designs and inscriptions that have something in common, and that he should not be confused and diverted from his aim by the inconsistencies, overlappings, and apparent contradictions that he is sure to encounter. In some instances it will be possible to determine the art types from which certain magical designs are derived. Comparison of the inscriptions enables us to ascertain the normal text of certain formulas of prayer or adjuration, in spite of the gross corruptions arising from the illiteracy or the carelessness of the makers. Even in the case of the jargon inscriptions comparison of one amulet with another, and with the magical words that are to be found in the papyri, can elicit something like a true text for a *nomen sacrum* or a longer formula. Then it may be possible for linguistic experts to recognize more non-Greek elements, and contribute something to the interpretation; yet the task will be fruitless in many cases, owing to the known tendency of magicians to use impressive but meaningless gibberish.

An investigation of amulets need not, and cannot, be made the occasion for a re-examination of the whole field of ancient magic. Some knowledge of magical ideas and practices is necessary in order to understand these objects; but their small size puts them in a limited and generally inferior class as compared with the papyrus texts and even the lead *defixiones*. On the whole it may be said that they illustrate many phases of ancient magic without greatly extending our knowledge of its principles and methods; yet it is also true that because of the intimate and personal character of these amulets, they bring home to us very vividly the grasp of magic upon thousands of ignorant and sometimes unprincipled people. Thus the pitiful prayers or conjurations scratched on these ringstones and pendants may mean as much for our vision of the ancient world as the papyrus books which were written by master magicians and read by their apprentices.

The tasks immediately before the student of amulets seem to fall into two groups, of which one is, broadly speaking, historical, the other descriptive. Under the former head, the influences that have contributed to the development of various sorts of amulets should be investigated and illustrated. Some of these influences are national or cultural, and thus one must consider which among the types owe their characteristics to Egypt, and which contain Greek, Jewish, or Persian elements; and it goes without saying that in an age of syncretism two or more of these influences may often be detected in a single specimen. It is also necessary to inquire whether any of the prayers and invocations that are inscribed on some amulets express a genuine religious feeling, and if so, to determine its relation to known religious groups, such as the Jews, the orthodox Christians, and the Gnostics. There are also certain literary influences that can be traced in amulets where Greek mythology has suggested the design or the legend.

A second group of problems concerns the various purposes for which magical amulets were employed; and in order to determine them one must examine all details of the designs and inscriptions with the greatest care, and make use of such pertinent information as can be drawn from literary sources and from the magical books. A considerable number are general prophylactics, designed, as a common legend runs, to "protect the wearer from all evil." Others are directed against the evil eye and other forms of enchantment. Many, perhaps the largest number of all, are meant to prevent or cure various diseases. Still others may be conveniently grouped under the head of social (or anti-social) magic — love charms, charms meant to gain favor for one person in the eyes of another (*χαριστήρια*), charms to break up love-affairs or friendly relations between two people (*διάκοποι*), charms intended to bring death or serious harm to an enemy.

. . . . . .

The foregoing pages have set forth many, but by no means all, of the problems that I have considered in a book of studies on magical amulets. That work is now well on its way to com-

pletion. My purpose in submitting this introductory chapter to the readers of the Review is twofold: first to draw out pertinent suggestions and criticisms; and second, to obtain information through correspondence about any collections or important single specimens of magical amulets which may be in the hands of American owners, and which may not have come to my attention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

FIGS. 1 and 3, Michigan 26109, obverse and reverse. Haematite, from Egypt. Obv.: Harpocrates, head surrounded by nimbus and seven double rays, seated to front on lotus, in boat; right hand raised, left holds ear of corn (?). Crowned hawk at each end of boat. At right of Harpocrates, goddess wearing hemhem crown, lotus sceptre in right hand, ankh in left. At left, goddess with atef crown, lotus sceptre in left hand, ankh in right. Minute figure of cynocephalus ape below right foot of god. Above, three scarabs, three cobras; at upper left, two goats, at upper right, goat and hawk. Under boat, three crocodiles. In field, two stars and two crescent moons.

Rev.: Scarab, with crowned hawk at each side; design surrounded by a long inscription which is regularly associated with solar deities, but has no known meaning.

FIG. 2, Michigan 26020, obverse. Sapphirine chalcedony, from Egypt. Unusually thick; apparently intended to resemble an egg or the kernel of a peach or a persea-fruit. Lion-headed serpent (Chnoubis) with seven-rayed nimbus. In field, the name Chnoubis and a special sign almost always found with this design. The name is not clearly visible on the photograph because of the shallow cutting and the curvature of the surface. The reverse has the word "digest." A stomach-amulet.

FIGS. 4 and 5, in the author's collection; obverse and reverse. Red carnelian with a diagonal band of white; from Egypt. Obv.: Harpocrates seated on the conventional symbol of the womb and resting his hand on the key that controls it; the whole design enclosed by a snake with his tail in his mouth (ouroboros). Within the ouroboros the words Aktiophi Ereschigal Neboutosoualeth, names elsewhere usually associated with Hecate and Persephone. Rev.: a long inscription containing (1), the word Ororiouth, apparently the name of a demon controlling the uterus; (2), a palindrome beginning in the second line and ending in the sixth; (3), several characters; (4), the seven vowels, not in order and some repeated. An amulet designed to relieve disorders of the female organs.

FIGS. 6 and 7, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 01.7556, obverse and reverse. Rock crystal. Obv.: Lion-headed god, standing to front, head to left. Seven rays round head. Wears chlamys clasped on right shoulder and falling over left arm and back, reaching below knees. Whip in right hand, orb in left. Rev.: inscription in six lines: (1), invocation, "Zeth aphobe," "fearless Seth"; (2–3), magical words of unknown meaning; (4–6), "be gracious to me (τη εμε ψυχη, i.e. τῇ ἐμῇ ψυχῇ) and to my children." For general protection; noteworthy because Set or Seth, usually a sinister figure in Egyptian mythology, is here invoked as a beneficent deity.

FIGS. 8 and 10, Michigan 26087, obverse and reverse. Haematite, from Egypt. Obv.: inscription consisting of over 240 minute letters with four larger ones at the end; completely unintelligible. Rev.: characters, with a few letters.

FIG. 9, Michigan 26055, obverse. Ironstone, from Egypt. Cow-headed goddess, Isis-Hathor, here as Hecate, holding a burning torch in each hand; she is dressed in a long tunic reaching to the ground. Round the figure three magical words which I have not noted elsewhere — *tharouchonno, balbanech, laennoura*. Reverse plain.

For the casts shown in FIGS. 6 and 7 I am indebted to the courtesy of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. The others were made by Miss Louise Shier, assistant curator in our Museum of Classical Archaeology. All the figures are in the size of the original stones.

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

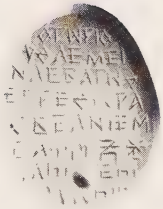

Fig. 5

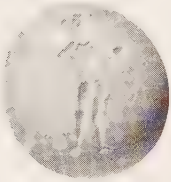

Fig. 6

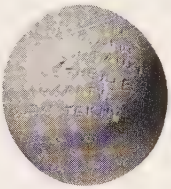

Fig. 7

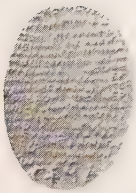

Fig. 8

Fig. 9

Fig. 10

BOETHIUS' FOURTH TRACTATE, THE SO-CALLED *DE FIDE CATHOLICA**

WILLIAM BARK

University of Chicago

The exact status of the fourth tractate included among the Opuscula Sacra of Boethius is still uncertain, though the other theological works are now almost universally accepted as genuine. Boethian scholars of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were generally inclined to reject Tractate IV.[1] Viktor Schurr, in the outstanding recent work devoted to the theological treatises, takes the same view, basing his judgment upon the lack of a title indicating authorship and upon the notation 'actenus Boetius' found between Tr. III and IV in Codex Augiensis XVIII (saec. IX).[2] Schurr, like some of his predecessors, was strongly influenced in this conclusion by the doctoral dissertation of E. K. Rand.[3] In that study Professor Rand attacked the authenticity of the unsigned treatise with vigor but also with prudence, tempering, in certain instances, the views of earlier proponents of his own position.[4] Though he concluded that Tr. IV was not genuine, he made no secret of the uncertainties of the case.[5]

That the question was, and still is, open was revealed by Professor Rand's later recantations, the first of which appeared

* I wish to express my gratitude to Yale University, where in 1944-45 I held one of the special research fellowships offered there during the war years. This essay is one of the products of studies which I was thus enabled to pursue at the Sterling Memorial Library.

[1] Viktor Schurr lists some of those for and against in Die Trinitätslehre des Boethius im Lichte der "skythischen Kontroversen" (Paderborn, 1935), 8, n. 40. He mistakenly cites August Hildebrand as supporting the authenticity of the document.

[2] Schurr, 7–9. It is worth noting, however, that Father Schurr gives less than two full pages to Tr. IV, which, in his opinion, had little to do with his subject.

[3] Ibid., 7–8. Professor Rand's dissertation, Der dem Boethius zugeschriebene Traktat de fide catholica, is in Jahrbücher für classische Philologie, XXVI, Supplementband (Leipzig, 1901) 401–461.

[4] For example, Rand, thesis, 416–425.

[5] A good illustration of this wise restraint is to be found in his thesis, 420, where it was remarked that Tr. IV, along with the other treatises, from the beginning has had a strong place in the tradition in two different recensions. The difficulty of interpreting the tradition aright, though not stressed, was made perfectly clear.

in 1918 in the edition of the theological tractates.[6] There, together with his co-editor, H. F. Stewart, he renounced his earlier conclusions. Though title and ascription to Boethius are lacking, the tractate is vouched for by its appearance in two recensions of the theological works and there is no reason for questioning it.[7] This hearty renunciation of his doctor's thesis by Professor Rand was warmly confirmed ten years later, when the 'little masterpiece' was again claimed for Boethius.[8] In the following year, 1929, he hesitated and almost turned back to his first position.[9] Further consideration largely dissipated these doubts and the last word of the scholar who has given more attention than any other to Tr. IV was in favor of the authenticity of the tractate. In 1936, in reviewing Schurr's study of Boethius' trinitarian doctrine, he remarked that Schurr had left Tr. IV out of consideration, apparently accepting Rand's original rejection of it, notwithstanding his later recantation.[10] In 1937 Dom Cappuyns, relying in part on Rand's revised interpretation, made known his acceptance of Tr. IV.[11]

[6] H. F. Stewart and E. K. Rand, Boethius: The Theological Tractates. The Consolation of Philosophy (Cambridge and New York, 1936; first printed in 1918), 52, n. a. All references to Boethius' works are to this edition.

[7] Ibid., 52, n. a. As noted above, Rand had already indicated, in his doctor's thesis, the firm position of Tr. IV in the tradition. Other re-interpretations presented in this edition will be commented on below.

[8] E. K. Rand, Founders of the Middle Ages (Cambridge, 1929; this work first appeared in 1928), 156–157, 315, n. 28.

[9] In a review of Lane Cooper, A Concordance of Boethius, the Five Theological Tractates and the Consolation of Philosophy (Cambridge, 1928). The review appeared in Speculum, IV (1929), 223–227. He here, p. 227, mentioned doubts about style, which struck him as different from that of the other four tractates and more in the 'esoteric' manner of the Consolation. He wondered too about disagreements in vocabulary and turns of phrase. Schurr referred (8, n. 43) to this hesitation without comment. Is the Consolation 'esoteric' in style as compared with the tractates? I doubt very much that Boethius thought so.

[10] Rand, review of Schurr's Trinitätslehre, Speculum, XI (1936), 153–156. See also Rand, The Building of Eternal Rome (Cambridge, 1943), 239, n. 104, where Tr. IV is again accepted as genuine.

[11] M. Cappuyns, 'Boèce' in Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques, IX (1937), cols. 348–380. In cols. 371–372 he accepts Rand's revised opinion but mentions neither Rand's review of Cooper's Concordance, nor his review of Schurr. Furthermore he does not consider the internal theological evidence, but until that evidence is examined the case can scarcely be regarded as complete.

The difficulties that prevent a full acceptance or rejection of this tractate are obvious. Yet this work may be of great importance for an understanding of Boethius' outlook and interests, possibly of far greater importance than has ever been recognized. The essay itself is a peculiar and puzzling creation, which Rand could, with no exaggeration, praise very highly. In seeking further information about it, we can do no better, it seems to me, than to call to our aid theology, which is still too little used in early medieval studies. Schurr's great contribution to our knowledge of Boethius was to show that the Opuscula Sacra originated in the philosopher-statesman's lively interest in the Theopaschite controversy, in which were concentrated some of the most vital issues, political as well as religious, of the sixth century.[12] Tr. IV has not thus far been examined with this new information in mind. It is my intention, in the following pages, to touch upon style and tradition but to consider chiefly the evidence presented by the theological controversies taken up in the disputed tractate. This evidence strengthens considerably Boethius' claim and re-opens the question of his purpose in writing the unnamed treatise that has been called De fide catholica.

There appears to be, in respect of style, no definitive evidence either for or against the authenticity of Tr. IV. As a stylist, Boethius was a man of singular versatility, writing with apparent ease and certainly with distinction in different ways upon different subjects as remote from each other as poetry, Trinitarian doctrine, and mathematics.[13] There is no reason for assuming that he could not have written a brief dogmatic profession admirable for its terseness and its frequently exalted tone and noticeably unlike the other tractates in manner.[14]

[12] On the importance of this controversy for politics, for theology, and for the development of scholasticism see Schurr, 228–232. For a comment on the connection between Boethius' theological activities and his arrest and execution for treason see my article, 'Theodoric vs. Boethius: Vindication and Apology,' American Historical Review, XLIX (1944), 410–426.

[13] As Rand noted in his thesis, 428.

[14] The comment of Friedrich Nitzsch, in Das System des Boethius und die ihm zugeschriebenen theologischen Schriften (Berlin, 1860), is interesting. He says of Tr. IV, p. 170: ' . . . der Stil desselben zeichnet sich vor dem aller anderen durch Kraft,

Even so the style of the De fide does not vary strikingly from that of the others; there are indeed some rather impressive similarities.[15] In the present state of our knowledge on the subject then, it may be assumed that though on the grounds of style there is nothing that with certainty links Tr. IV with the other theological works, neither is there anything which positively sets it apart from them.[16]

The lack of a title or ascription to Boethius and the note 'actenus Boetius' in the Karlsruhe MS XVIII (R) have in the past been regarded as weighty witnesses against Tr. IV and more recently have been taken very seriously by Schurr.[17] But this evidence may be dismissed. Dom Cappuyns points out that Tr. IV does not require a superscription because, unlike the other treatises, it is not addressed to anyone. The note 'actenus Boetius,' the evidence of an isolated manuscript, is to be attributed to the private initiative of the copyist.[18] This clear and simple refutation of both objections deserves a cordial reception. There was little reason for making a mystery of the lack of superscription in the first place. The same can be said of the comment 'actenus Boetius.' Superscription or no, there is hardly more justification for ruling out Tr. IV on the basis of this copyist's note than for discarding Tr. V. Moreover,

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Lebendigkeit und Gedrungenheit aus; einige Stellen haben einen fast liturgischen, das ganze hat einen kirchlichen Charakter. . . .' Indeed the manner of expression, it seems to me, sometimes approaches the mystical mode of some of Boethius' Eastern contemporaries. See also Rand, Founders, 156–157.

[15] Note the comparisons in the Rand-Stewart edition, 104, n. a and 126, n. b. Compare also lines 9–14 and 32–34 in Tr. IV with lines 7–15 in Tr. I, i.

[16] See Arthur P. McKinlay, 'Stylistic Tests and the Chronology of the Works of Boethius,' Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, XVIII (1907), 123–156. According to the stylistic tables on pp. 138–139 there are no significant variations between Tr. IV and the other tractates. See Cappuyns, 371.

[17] Rand, thesis, 416–420, and Schurr, 8. See also Hermann Usener, Anecdoton Holderi: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte Roms in ostgotischer Zeit, in Festschrift zur Begrüssung der XXXII Versammlung deutscher Philologen und Schulmänner zu Wiesbaden (Bonn, 1877), 49–50, 55–56, 59.

[18] Cappuyns, 372. Rand, review of Schurr, Trinitätslehre, in Speculum, XI, 153, in referring to the second point, says, 'The significance of that note, I believe, is diminished by the complete evidence of the tradition. Traube asked me, I remember, why Reginbert, the writer of that part of R, should know more about the matter than we.' See Cappuyns, 371, for his views on the tradition. Cf. Rand, thesis, 419.

Cassiodorus said of Boethius' theological works: 'scripsit librum de sancta trinitate et capita quaedam dogmatica et librum contra Nestorium,' which provides further support for the authenticity of Tr. IV since *capita dogmatica* must refer to this work.[19] Indeed the description can hardly refer to the other works, certainly not to I, II, and V, and possibly not to III.[20] It is conceivable, however, that III was included with IV under the term *capita dogmatica*. In sum, Boethius' name was not attached to Tr. IV because it was not considered necessary. Less trustful readers in later centuries were confused by the omission; thence came the note 'actenus Boetius' and the subsequent debate. On the basis of the tradition the genuineness of Tr. IV, though not entirely certain, is more probable than not.

The theological evidence is the most interesting.[21] The author of Tr. IV alludes to the Arian, Sabellian, Manichaean, Pelagian,

[19] For the fragment see Usener, Anecdoton Holderi, 4, lines 14–16. Rand-Stewart edition, 52–53, n. a, and Rand, Founders, 315, n. 28.

[20] Rand's suggestion is accepted by Cappuyns, 371, who adds that it is not improbable that, in Boethius' time, as was the case in the later Middle Ages, Tr. II and III (?) were included with Tr. I under the title Liber de Trinitate.

[21] There is no need to treat at length the point raised by Nitzsch and by Rand, in his dissertation, concerning the alleged difference between Boethius' creation doctrine and that of Tr. IV. That Boethius as a theologian was *sui generis* is well known to those who have studied the Opuscula Sacra and the Consolation. But see Edmund T. Silk, 'Boethius's Consolatio Philosophiae as a Sequel to Augustine's Dialogues and Soliloquia,' Harvard Theological Review, XXXII (1939), 19–39; Fritz Klingner, De Boethii Consolatione Philosophiae in Philologische Untersuchungen, XXVII (1921); and Raoul Carton, 'Le christianisme et l'Augustinisme de Boèce,' Revue de philosophie, nouvelle série, I (1930), 573–659. It is recognized of course that Boethius was much influenced by Greek thought; it should also be remembered that he had not finished his contemplated career of writing at the time of his death. Nitzsch, who wrote before the publication of the Anecdoton Holderi, believed the arguments used against Boethius' authorship of Tr. V (he rejected all the tractates) could also be used against Tr. IV (169). For Rand's discussion see his thesis, 425–427, where he takes issue with Nitzsch and disputes Hildebrand's views on Boethius' creation doctrine. But if this thought concerning Boethius' belief in respect of *nihil ex nihilo*, as expressed in the Consolation, were carried through, would it not actually constitute an argument against Boethius' Christianity or at least his orthodoxy? It is not necessary, however, to discover the creation theory of the Consolation in Tr. IV in order to establish the authenticity of the latter. And as Rand and Stewart point out in their edition (56, n. b), the expression *ex nihilo creauit* is not used in the disputed tractate. See also, ibid., 104, n. a and 126, n. b.

Nestorian, and Eutychian heresies, and some of his allusions are extremely provocative and illuminating, especially as found in this peculiar treatise so closely associated with Boethius.[22] We now know that Boethius was deeply interested in some of the questions arising out of the sixth century disputes connected more or less directly with all of those heresies. The treatment of these questions by the author of Tr. IV reveals a more than accidental similarity of interpretation.

The fourth tractate gives a brief sketch of the major events, and the significance of those events, in the religious history of man from the creation to the end of the world and the last judgment.[23] The author does not begin upon this project at once, however, which, I believe, is a fact of some meaning. He first proceeds to a succinct and forceful analysis of the Trinity, upon which he says the Christian religion is based. These remarks about the Trinity are singular enough to require further consideration.[24] The rest of the tract is simply expressed but the doctrine of the Trinity is probed with some detail in a manner not consistent with the brevity and the plain narrative manner of most of what follows. This strangely didactic emphasis upon the Trinity and upon beliefs and heresies connected with it, such as the procession of the Holy Spirit, Arianism, Sabellianism, and Manichaeanism, at first seems out of place. It suggests that this was a matter of more than ordinary concern to the author, who considered it essential to clarify the question before going on to other things.

This minor puzzle can, I believe, be cleared up, and its explanation points again to Boethius as the author of Tr. IV. Such emphasis upon Trinitarian doctrine in a work firmly established among admittedly genuine treatises of Boethius is enough in itself to draw attention. It becomes even more remarkable when we remember that Boethius had been led to a

[22] For the view that Tr. IV was written in Boethius' time see Rand, thesis, 441 ff. and Nitzsch, 170.

[23] The influence of Augustine upon this work was very great, just as it was in Boethius' Trinitarian studies. Rand, thesis, 420–425.

[24] Nitzsch, 166, noticed that these remarks were more involved than what followed but did not discuss them.

scientific analysis of the Trinity by the Scythian controversy, which was Trinitarian and Christological in nature. It is a matter of considerable historical significance that Justinian, who was already taking an active part in the settlement of religious disputes, also interested himself in the Scythian affair. After the formal conclusion of the Acacian schism (484–519) unrest within the Eastern church became so lively as to threaten the friendly relations which had only just been resumed between Rome and Constantinople. In order to rescue his policy, Justinian had to restore ecclesiastical harmony. To achieve that end a compromise agreeable both to Rome and the East was required; it was apparently at this juncture, in 519, that the future emperor began to look hopefully upon the Scythian formula.[25] Boethius' Tr. I and II were written only a few years later, probably just before the year 523, and his fifth treatise not very long before that.[26] In all of those tractates Boethius gave strong support to the compromise position advocated by the Scythians and adopted by Justinian.[27] He undoubtedly recognized the importance of the question for the restoration and maintenance of peace within the church, and that this was a matter of heartfelt concern to him there can scarcely be any question.

All these matters bear upon Tr. IV, for they offer an explanation of the striking emphasis upon the Trinity in the introduction to this work. Boethius had written more than once to counteract the disruptive influence of the Trinitarian disputes, and we may reasonably assume that the same motive accounts for the particular attention paid to the Trinitarian problem in Tr. IV. One can readily believe that Boethius, in writing a general treatise some time after 519, even if it were intended for a wider public than his more esoteric theological

[25] For further discussion, references, and an interpretation see 'Theodoric vs. Boethius,' especially 411–415.

[26] Schurr, 105–107, 224–225. Schurr, 127, believed Tr. V was written some years earlier in 512–513. Cappuyns, 374, suggests that its date be put closer to that of I and II, but offers neither evidence nor convincing argument in support of a revision of Schurr's chronology. Certainly the later date may be considered more convenient but thus far there is no reason for considering it anything more than convenient.

[27] Schurr, 135–136, 224–225.

compositions, would have insisted upon including a warning against the most troublesome and dangerous question then menacing the church. It would be very natural, moreover, for one who had just finished a learned study of the subject to exceed the requirements of a simple, historical profession of faith.

Boethius' claim to the authorship of Tr. IV is upheld by an examination of the introduction to the work. In several instances this tractate repeats the thought and words of Boethius' comments in the other Trinitarian discussions. Tr. IV explains very carefully that the divine substance of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, that there are not three Gods but only one. It says, lines 7–14:

'Haec autem religio nostra, quae uocatur christiana atque catholica, his fundamentis principaliter nititur asserens: ex aeterno, id est ante mundi constitutionem, ante omne uidelicet quod temporis potest retinere uocabulum, diuinam patris et filii ac spiritus sancti exstitisse substantiam, ita ut deum dicat patrem, deum filium, deum spiritum sanctum, nec tamen tres deos sed unum.'

The point set forth so clearly here was also painstakingly and more elaborately treated by Boethius elsewhere and by the Scythian theologians.[28] Boethius begins Tr. II by asking whether Father, Son, and Holy Spirit may be predicated of the Divinity substantially or in some other way.[29] Note the similarity of words and emphasis in the following lines, 3–11:

' . . . uiamque indaginis hinc arbitror esse sumendam, unde rerum omnium manifestum constat exordium, id est ab ipsis catholicae fidei fundamentis. Si igitur interrogem, an qui dicitur pater substantia sit, respondetur esse substantia. Quod si quaeram, an filius substantia sit, idem dicitur. Spiritum quoque sanctum substantiam esse nemo dubitauerit. Sed cum rursus colligo patrem filium spiritum sanctum, non plures sed una occurrit esse substantia.'

A little below he adds, lines 19–21: 'Hoc modo si dicimus: "Pater deus est, filius deus est, spiritus sanctus deus est," pater filius ac spiritus sanctus unus deus.'

Such similarities are also to be found in Tr. I.[30] At the be-

[28] For a full statement and extensive quotations see Schurr, 210–219.

[29] For a discussion of the philosophical principles involved see Schurr, 21–46.

[30] Tr. I, as Schurr has shown, 97–104, was written after II and expands and extends the argument presented in the earlier and shorter treatise.

ginning of Chapter I, after making another of those noteworthy references to the *fides catholica*, Boethius remarks, lines 7–9: 'Cuius haec de trinitatis unitate sententia est: "Pater," inquiunt, "deus filius deus spiritus sanctus deus." Igitur pater filius spiritus sanctus unus non tres dii.' [31] There is nothing startling or original about the simple definition of the Trinity in Tr. I, II, and IV; the question had already been taken up by Augustine, Boethius' master, to whose leadership he alludes in Tr. I (preface, 31–34).[32] In Tr. I, II, and IV, however, it is not just a matter of regarding the same general subject from the same point of view; in these essays not only thought, words, and phrases directly concerning the Trinity are alike but also less directly related subjects, such, for instance, as the references to the *fundamenta* of the Catholic faith in Tr. II and IV.[33] Another example is the illustrative reference to Arianism following the definition of the Trinity in I, i, and in IV.

There are other theological points in Tr. IV which add something to the case for Boethius' authorship. Nitzsch challenged some of the references to heresies in Tr. IV. Thus he maintained that even though the statement of the Sabellian teaching on three πρόσωπα was not actually false, still it was not pertinent and not historically accurate.[34] Certainly an accurate knowledge of Sabellianism would be expected of Boethius, and

[31] In Tr. I and II these references to the Trinity are followed by esoteric discussions, since, as explained by the prefatory letter of Tr. I and by the dedication and conclusion of Tr. II, they were addressed to specialists. There is no such learned discussion in Tr. IV, but it was not the working out of a problem.

[32] In the De trinitate, V, 8 (PL 42) Augustine says: 'Quemadmodum enim Pater Deus est, et Filius Deus est, et Spiritus sanctus Deus est, quod secundum substantiam dici nemo dubitat: non tamen tres deos, sed unum Deum dicimus eam ipsam praestantissiman Trinitatem.'

[33] And the *fides catholica* is defined in Tr. I in a way strongly reminiscent of Tr. IV. Cf. I, i, 1–6 and IV, 257–265. Reference should also be made again to the similarities pointed out in the Rand-Stewart edition, 104, n. a and 126, n. b.

[34] Nitzsch, 168. The statement of Tr. IV, lines 34–40, is: 'Sabelliani quoque non tres exsistentes personas sed unam ausi sunt affirmare, eundem dicentes patrem esse qui filius est eundemque filium qui pater est atque spiritum sanctum eundem esse qui pater et filius est; ac per hoc unam dicunt esse personam sub uocabulorum diuersitate signatam.' August Hildebrand, in Boëthius und seine Stellung zum Christentume (Regensburg, 1885), 295–309, also rejects Tr. IV but his arguments are weak and irrelevant.

consequently such errors as Nitzsch pretended to find in Tr. IV would be reason for doubting that Boethius wrote the treatise. But there is no such misinterpretation in Tr. IV. There is simply a concise statement of the significance of the heresy with respect to the question the author was chiefly interested in, the Trinitarian.[35] Though the Sabellians used the term πρόσωπον, which was translated as *persona*, and spoke of three persons, they did not really regard the persons as distinct.[36] Their language was orthodox but their interpretation amounted to a belief in one person. Tr. IV on the Sabellians is, then, brief but correct.

[35] Sabellianism also drew the fire of the Scythians. See John Maxentius, Dialogi contra Nestorianos libri II, in Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum, ed. Schwartz, IV, 2, p. 39, lines 32 ff., and Dionysius Exiguus, preface to his translation of Proclus' Tomus ad Armenios, ACO IV, 2, p. 196, lines 18–25. Dionysius describes the Sabellian belief exactly as Tr. IV does. In defending the Scythian formula, *unus ex trinitate*, and reassuring Westerners who were afraid of the new expression, he declares: ' . . . post auctoritatem apostolicam id ipsum exequentem multipliciter uenerabilium quoque patrum testimoniis adprobatum est ob distinctionem personarum, cum ratio poposcerit, unum ex tribus fideliter posse praedicari, maxime contra Sabellium, qui sanctam trinitatem unius credit esse personae eamque nominibus tantum fatetur esse [non] tribus, quam nos unius uenerantes essentiae personarum solummodo cognitione discernimus.' Dionysius also defends his Trinitarian views against the Nestorians and against those (p. 197, lines 1–4): 'qui uocabulum trinitatis non personarum esse significatiuum, sed substantiae suspicantur. quibus ⟨sci⟩ licet ad informationem ueri debuerat appellatio ipsa sufficere, quae uim pluralis numeri resonans non essentiam, sed personas indubitanter expromit.' Boethius dealt in the same way with numbers in the Trinity. In Tr. II, after explaining that there is diversity of persons in the Trinity but unity of substance, he says, lines 58–62: 'Quod si personae diuisae sunt, substantia uero indiuisa sit, necesse est quod uocabulum ex personis originem capit id ad substantiam non pertinere; at trinitatem personarum diuersitas fecit, trinitas igitur non pertinet ad substantiam.' Tr. IV does not go into the question of numbers in detail but the essence of Boethius' and Dionysius' views is there. For another striking comparison see Tr. II, lines 52–54, and Tr. IV, lines 36–38. On the similarity of Boethius' and Dionysius' interpretations see Schurr, 207–209.

[36] See C. J. Hefele-H. Leclercq, Histoire des conciles d'après les documents originaux I, 2 (Paris, 1907), 966, on the Sabellian interpretation of πρόσωπον. For Sabellianism see G. T. Stokes, 'Sabellianism' in Dictionary of Christian Biography and Adolf von Harnack, Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte, fünfte, photomechanisch gedruckte Auflage, I (Tübingen, 1931), 763. Harnack here observes: 'Die Annahme von Nitzsch und Anderen, man müsse zwischen zwei Stadien in der Theologie des Sabellius unterscheiden, wird unnöthig, sobald nur die unzuverlässigen Quellen ausgeschieden sind. Der Hauptsatz auch des Sabellius lautete, dass derselbe der Vater, derselbe der Sohn, derselbe der h. Geist sei. An einem und demselben Wesen haften also drei Namen.'

Such a theological ellipsis is hardly grounds for questioning the knowledge and authority of the writer of the definition, who was not, in any case, attempting a historical review of the heresy. Indeed such brevity in a theological discourse is admirable for its rarity. In short, all three of the heresies cited in the first part of Tr. IV, Arianism, Sabellianism, and Manichaeanism, are so interpreted as to suggest that the author had the same point of view as Boethius in Tr. I, II, and V.[37] They are consistent, that is to say, with Boethius' wish to present a Trinitarian doctrine supporting the Scythian formula, *unus ex trinitate passus carne*. That formula, if it was to avoid suspicion, required the clear distinction of the persons of the Trinity. If Boethius wrote Tr. IV, it is easy to see why, here as in Tr. I and II, he expounded the nature of the Trinity so explicitly and also why, in his historical account of the Catholic faith, he perspicaciously stressed the importance of this doctrine as one of the foundations of the Christian religion.

In the same way the teaching of Tr. IV on the procession of the Holy Spirit is in agreement with Boethius' doctrinal position. The Holy Spirit, neither begotten, nor begetting, proceeds from the Father and the Son.[38] In Tr. I Boethius taught that the Son proceeded from the Father, and the Holy Spirit from both.[39] The controversy over the Holy Spirit was part of

[37] Compare Tr. IV, lines 49–53, on the Manichaean denial of the Virgin birth of the Son with Tr. V, v, where Boethius refutes Eutyches on Christ's birth.

[38] Tr. IV, 22–25. The language is interesting. On the use of uel in the phrase 'a patre quoque procedentem uel filio' see Rand-Stewart edition, 56, n. a and Rand's dissertation, 441–442. Cf. Hildebrand, 296, 308, who incorrectly translates uel as oder.

[39] Tr. I, v, 45–48. If Boethius wrote Tr. IV as well as I, he may have used 'quoque' in the passage cited in the preceding note with the notion that the Spirit too proceeded from the Father just as the Son did. I do not think we need consider Boethius' terminology loose, as Rand does in his dissertation, 442, n. 2, simply because he says, Tr. I, v, 46–48: '. . . cogitemus processisse quidem ex deo patre filium deum et ex utrisque spiritum sanctum.' This language was perhaps a trifle unusual, even in the sixth century, but it was not heretical. It is one thing to say the Son proceeded from the Father; it would have been something quite different to say the Spirit was begotten. Note Augustine's terminology, De trinitate, XV, 27 (PL 42): 'Quia nec filius hominum simul et ex patre et ex matre procedit,' etc. He points out, in the same place, that it would be quite wrong to say the Spirit was begotten and he also remarks, with deep feeling, I suspect, that in the Trinity: 'difficillimum est generationem a processione distinguere.'

the Trinitarian dispute carried on between the rival theological schools of Alexandria and Antioch. Cyril of Alexandria in his ninth anathema against Nestorius declared that the Holy Spirit is the spirit of the Son, whereas Theodore of Mopsuestia had taught that the Spirit was derived from the Father alone and not from the Son.[40] The Scythian theologians, especially Dionysius Exiguus, were devoted to the Alexandrine theology and to Cyril, who was the hero of a vast number of Easterners. And with the Trinitarian views of the Scythians Boethius was in hearty agreement.[41] In both Tr. I and IV the procession of the Holy Spirit is treated in an orthodox manner in accord with the teachings of Augustine in the West and Cyril in the East and in such a way as to suggest that the author in each case had the Trinitarian disputes of the sixth century in mind.

One last theological point of contact between Boethius' recognized works and Tr. IV remains to be discussed. In the unsigned treatise a relatively long passage is devoted to Christ's birth of the Virgin, his assumption of manhood, and Nestorius' and Eutyches' distortion of the orthodox teaching on the subject. The condemnation of these two heresiarchs is more vehement than that of any others.[42] What is the explanation of this relatively great interest in the Christological and Trinitarian question? Comparison with Boethius' fifth tractate is illuminating. The Liber contra Eutychen et Nestorium is a brilliant piece of work, the product of profound and assiduous reasoning, written with the warmth of conviction. The fervor

[40] For Cyril's anathema see Hefele-Leclercq, II, 1, 275–276, and n. 2. For Theodore's creed see August Hahn, Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der alten Kirche, dritte Auflage (Breslau, 1897), 302. See also J. F. Bethune-Baker, An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine to the Time of the Council of Chalcedon, fourth edition (London, 1929), 214–216. Theodore's creed was mentioned with strong disapproval by Dionysius Exiguus in the preface cited above, ACO, IV, 2, 196. It is also noteworthy that this creed was translated into Latin by the compiler of the Palatine Collection, who was a Scythian contemporary of Boethius, ACO I, 5.

[41] See Schurr, 211–215 for more information on Boethius, the Scythians, and the question of number in the Trinity.

[42] Tr. IV, 207–213: 'Sed huic tam sanae atque ueracissimae fidei exstiterant multi qui diuersa garrirent et praeter alios Nestorius et Eutyches repertores haereseos exstiterunt, quorum unus hominem solum, alter deum solum putauit asserere nec humanum corpus quod Christus induerat de humanae substantiae participatione uenisse.' Note the brief mention of Pelagius, Tr. IV, 113–117.

of Tr. IV is wholly concordant with the feeling of Boethius as set forth in Tr. V. The condemnation of the two heretics is terse and abridged but it is thoroughly consistent with the detailed analysis given by Boethius.[43]

A review of the evidence derived from the theological controversies mentioned in Tr. IV is now in order. Great emphasis is put upon the establishment of a clear interpretation of the orthodox Trinitarian doctrine concerning the unity of the substance and the distinction of the persons. Six heresies are named and five of them have Trinitarian implications. It was this same Trinitarian question, as raised by the Scythian monks, that stimulated Boethius to compose Tr. I, II, and V.[44] A comparison of Tr. IV and the recognized Boethian treatises on the Trinitarian question reveals nowhere divergent interpretations but, to the contrary, close similarity, extending even to details of language. This evidence, when added to that of the manuscript tradition, makes Boethius' authorship of Tr. IV more than probable. It may be urged against this view that the identification is not altogether conclusive. That is so; but in the present state of the evidence it is more sensible to assume that Boethius wrote Tr. IV than to suppose that someone else wrote it. The reasons for rejecting Boethius' authorship are flimsy; the reasons for accepting it are substantial.

What could have been the author's purpose in writing the tractate De fide? The question has stirred much speculation,

[43] Nitzsch does not agree. After the declaration that the statement of Tr. IV on the Sabellians is not pertinent and not historically accurate, he adds that the same is true of the assertion that Nestorius pronounced Christ to be man only and that Eutyches regarded him as a purely divine being. Nitzsch expected a great deal of a summary statement. But Tr. IV, far from contradicting Tr. V, is in agreement with it. In Tr. V, iv, 67–125, Boethius explained that as long as the persons remained, as Nestorius taught, there could be no assumption of humanity and hence Christ would be no more God than the saints. In Tr. V, v, 5–7, he accused Eutyches of believing that after the assumption of humanity the human nature did not remain. Hildebrand also (303–304) expected too much of a brief statement and as a result thought he saw a difference between Tr. IV and Boethius' analysis of the Nestorian-Eutychian question in V. Boethius issued a pertinent warning on brevity to his friend John the Deacon, Tr. III, lines 11–14: 'Prohinc tu ne sis obscuritatibus breuitatis aduersus, quae cum sint arcani fida custodia tum id habent commodi, quod cum his solis qui digni sunt conloquuntur.'

[44] The sixth heresy named in Tr. IV, the Pelagian, was also attacked by the Scythian monks.

among those who have denied Boethius' authorship as well as among those who have affirmed it. Professor Rand suggests that Tr. IV was meant to be a short statement of the doctrinal articles in which Boethius believed, drawn up to clarify his thought, a preliminary exercise to be expanded later, and not intended for publication.[45] It is certainly conceivable that the work was a précis, on which Boethius planned to base a fuller, more inclusive treatment. We have long known the extent of his philosophical and scientific powers, and now we are aware of his extraordinary ability as a theologian, at once the spiritual disciple of Augustine and the devoted student of the Greeks. Since Boethius was still a relatively young man when the theological tractates were composed, it would be hard to set a limit to what he might have done in the Roman West of the sixth century in bringing Plato, Aristotle, and the followers of Plotinus into the service of the *fides christiana* in a truly *magnum opus*. Altogether, however, there is little support for the hypothesis, attractive though it is, that Tr. IV was an outline for such a great work.

Another possibility, more prosaic, corresponds better with what we know about the treatise. Tr. IV is simple and brief, but it is not incomplete. It is so written, with energy, with conviction, and with sensitiveness, as to be exceedingly impressive. There are, in addition, definite indications of a didactic motive on the part of the author.[46] Because of these considerations, I wonder if it is not more likely that Boethius meant it to be a guide for the layman. We know that the doctrinal questions of Boethius' day, especially those of Oriental origin, were very confusing to ordinary Western Christians, who were interested in them but for obvious reasons could not always distinguish between the orthodox and the heretical. We know also that there were attempts both by the Scythians and by their opponents in Rome to win public support.[47] It has

[45] Rand, Founders, 157. Schurr, 8–9, n. 46, does not agree, since Tr. IV seems to him to be 'ein ungemein sorgfältig ausgearbeitetes, theologisch sehr hochstehendes Glaubenssymbol.'

[46] Lines 94–96 and 247–253. Note Schurr's comment, 8–9, n. 46.

[47] For that reason an unknown Scythian compiled the Collectio Palatina and in it appealed to the definitions of Nestorianism and Eutychianism prepared by his com-

already been shown that Boethius' theology was very close to the Scythian; whether their alliance was openly avowed or not, we do not yet know. Boethius unquestionably understood the Eastern doctrines then being discussed so widely in Rome better than any of his countrymen. Perhaps he and his friends thought it advisable for him to turn from his highly specialized theological works to edify, to protect, and if possible, to win over the Romans. That would accord with the strange weaving together of Trinitarian doctrine and a compact narrative of Christian history. In that fabric nothing is clearer than the importance the writer put upon his Trinitarian teaching, which he proclaimed one of the fundamental doctrines of the Catholic faith.

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patriot, John, bishop of Tomi, who was presumably John Maxentius. Dionysius Exiguus made his translations of theological documents for the same reason. Pope Hormisdas vigorously defended his rather hostile treatment of the Scythians and Maxentius replied. A senator, Faustus by name, asked the presbyter Trifolius to explain the Scythian formula and Trifolius gave an unfriendly interpretation of the Theopaschite position. Both sides energetically tried to win the support of senate and people.

LIKE CHILDREN

THERE is a saying of Jesus, found in Mark x. 15 and Luke xviii. 17, which seems to have exercised considerable influence on the imaginations of early Christians. "Whoever will not receive the kingdom of God as a child shall not enter into it." Another form of the same saying apparently interprets it in relation to conversion and regeneration. "Unless you turn and become like children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew xviii. 3). A further development of the same thought is to be found in John iii. 3: "Verily, verily, I say to you, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And in John iii. 5, after Nicodemus' misunderstanding, the saying is finally clarified: "Unless a man is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Justin thinks of the two sayings as closely related, for in Apol. i. 61. 4 he conflates them: *ἂν μὴ ἀναγεννηθῆτε, οὐ μὴ εἰσέλθητε εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν.*

It is possible that this saying was used by enthusiasts in the Christian community at Corinth to justify their emphasis on spiritual gifts, especially glossolalia. Throughout I Corinthians St. Paul is concerned with answering questions and giving advice on topics which had come to him in a letter from Corinth. In I Corinthians xii. 1 he turns to the topic of spiritual gifts, which he discusses in chapters xii–xiv. Except in the case of digressions, such as the magnificent one in chapter xiii, his interest is probably practical and concerned with what the "spirituals" do and say. In xiv. 19 he concludes one section of his instruction with a summary: "I thank God, that I speak in tongues more than all of you; but in church I would rather speak five words with my mind, to instruct others, than ten thousand with a tongue." The transition to the next verse is abrupt, and it may be inferred that another topic from Corinth is being discussed. "Brethren, do not become children in intelligence; act as children (*νηπιάζετε*) toward evil, but become mature in intelligence." It seems likely that they have been claiming that their childish behavior has the sanction of the Lord's command. They have been reborn, or at any rate baptized, and they claim that the glossolalia proves their reception of the Spirit.

A somewhat different view of the relation between childhood and maturity in religion is found elsewhere in St. Paul's letters. This is his picture of the *παιδαγωγός* in Galatians iii. 24–iv. 7. Until he is of age, the child is under the slave who takes him to school and teaches him his alphabet. During this period (*ὅτε ἦμεν νήπιοι*) we can be de-

scribed as ὑπὸ τὰ στοχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου . . . δεδουλωμένοι. What are these στοιχεῖα? In view of the ambiguity of the word στοιχεῖον,[1] as of the Hebrew אות,[2] its meaning should not be restricted to either planets or letters of the alphabet, which in any event were often associated in magic. But it is worth observing what we have learned when we have become sons. We have been taught by the Spirit in our hearts (as in Romans viii. 15) to cry, Ἀββᾶ, ὁ πατήρ. Ὁ πατήρ is evidently, as in Mark xiv. 36, an explanation of what Ἀββᾶ means. The significance of Ἀββᾶ is made clearer when it is written in capitals, ABBA. It is the first two letters of the ABC.

In the apocryphal literature of the second century these two letters are regarded as highly important. The child Jesus is represented as knowing their esoteric meaning. To his teacher he says, "If you know letters well, tell me the power of the Alpha, and I will tell you the power of the Beta." [3] It is possible that Matthew and Luke were aware of the implications being read into ABBA, for they omit Mark's use of the word.[4]

Just as in I Corinthians vii. 12–17 St. Paul is forced by circum-

[1] See F. Dornseiff, Das Alphabet in Mystik und Magie (ΣΤΟΙΧΕΙΑ VII) ed. 2 (Leipzig-Berlin, 1925), 14–17; J. B. Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians ed. 10 (London, 1890), 167; E. D. Burton, The Epistle to the Galatians (New York, 1920), 510–18; G. A. Deissmann in Encyclopedia Biblica II 1258–62.

[2] W. L. Knox, St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles (Cambridge, 1939), 109.

[3] Irenaeus, Adv. haer. i. 20. 1 (I, 177 f. Harvey) sharply questions the authenticity of the story (κἀκεῖνο τὸ ῥαδιούργημα), which the Marcosians are using. It is found in various versions of the Gospel of Thomas (Greek text A vi. 3, p. 145 Tischendorf; xiv. 2 p. 153; B vii. 1 p. 160; Latin vi. 6 p. 171 f. See M. R. James, The Apocryphal New Testament, Oxford, 1924, 53, 56, 61) and in the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy (48 f., p. 122–25 Thilo, p. 206 f. Tischendorf). Probably it is intended to explain John vii. 15 (πῶς οὗτος γράμματα οἶδεν μὴ μεμαθηκώς;) understood literally (see E. J. Goodspeed, Problems of New Testament Translation [Chicago 1945] 102–4) of Jesus as ἀγράμματος. W. Bauer (Das Johannesevangelium, ed. 2 [Tübingen, 1925] 105) refers to seven Oxyrhynchus papyri to show that this means "Analphabet." See R. Bultmann, Das Johannes-Evangelium (Göttingen, 1937–), 205. Similarly the story in John vii. 53–viii. 11 is inserted to prove that Jesus could write. Another point which the creative imagination of early Christians worked over is to be found in Luke ii. 46. What did Jesus teach the teachers of Israel? On this see P. J. Temple, The Boyhood Consciousness of Christ: a Critical Examination of Luke ii. 49 (New York, 1922), especially 3–26. The question of the alphabet and the teaching in the temple are associated in the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy 48–53. Note c. 50, p. 126 f. Thilo: "Have you read books?" The Lord Jesus replies, "I have read books and those things which are contained in books." Professor S. E. Johnson observes that "the Alpha and Beta story is found in chap. 4 of the Epistle of the Apostles (James p. 486). This is no doubt earlier than the Gospel of Thomas which we now have."

[4] Matthew xxvi. 42, Luke xxii. 42, Mark xiv. 36.

stances to reinterpret and go beyond a saying of Jesus, so also here. As C. H. Dodd observes,[5] "the cry Abba is adduced as evidence that we are children of God." We turned and became as children. Now, however, we have completed our elementary education. We have learned our spiritual alphabet and can proceed from milk to meat.[6]

"Act as children toward evil, but become mature in intelligence."

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[5] Romans (London, 1932), 129.

[6] I Corinthians iii. 1–3, I Thessalonians ii. 7. See also I Peter ii. 2, Hebrews v. 12–vi. 8.

THE MITHRAIC SYMBOLISM OF MERCURY CARRYING THE INFANT BACCHUS *

An interesting sidelight on our knowledge of the mystery cult of Mithras in antiquity is provided by a group of provincial Roman sculptures which represent Mercury carrying the infant Bacchus. The popularity of the representation, attested by at least thirteen votive reliefs and three statues,[1] and the concentration of these monuments in the region which is today Alsace-Lorraine are facts which need explanation. The subject is not unknown in other provinces of the Roman Empire, but it appears in isolated examples of sculpture and minor arts unlike the unified group from Germania Superior and adjacent territory, which in geographical distribution and in icon-

* I should like to express my gratitude to Dr. Karl Lehmann, who has read this note and offered helpful suggestions.

[1] Provincial statuettes of bronze are also known, but will not be considered in this article which proposes to deal with a limited group of dedications and not with the iconography as a whole. In the main these statuettes seem to derive from the periphery of the region under discussion, although their provenances may not necessarily be considered the places of their execution. Five of these statuettes are known to me: (a) Louvre no. 655. Of unknown provenance. Ridder, Bronzes antiques du Louvre, I, no. 547, pl. 40, with bibl. The best reproduction is to be found in the Journal of Hellenic Studies, iii, 1882, pl. facing p. 207 (illustration to Waldstein article on pp. 107–110; he considered it the closest reproduction of the Hermes of Praxiteles, which is manifestly inaccurate). (b) Sofia, National Museum. From Gigen (the ancient Oescus). The child holds grapes in his right hand and a thyrsos in his left. Bulletin de l'Institut archéol. Bulgare, iii, 1925, pp. 248–253, fig. 67. (c) Zurich Antiquarium. From Vindonissa. Benndorf in Vorlegeblätter für archäol. übungen, series A, Vienna, 1879, pl. XII, 13. (d) Péronne. From Marché Allouarde near Roye (Somme). Danicourt, Revue archéol., iv, 1884[2], pp. 72–75, pl. 4. (e) Autun, Bulliot collection (?). From Champdôtre-les-Auxonne (Côte d'Or). Villefosse, Gazette archéol., xiv, 1889, pp. 95–101, pl. 19. This, more than any other provincial representation of the subject, can be related to a remote reflection of the Praxiteles statue, although the child derives from another tradition which I relate to Kephisodotos.

The problem of iconographic inspiration for these provincial sculptures will be discussed elsewhere. Despite the fact that scholars postulate dependence on the Hermes of Praxiteles in individual cases, there is generally no foundation for such connection. Of the monuments under discussion only two (nos. 1 and 6) portray Mercury with his right arm raised above his head, holding a bunch of grapes, and the child in all examples is turned in an entirely different pose from that of the Olympia statue. In the two reliefs which do recall that work, the ponderation of Mercury is in no way related. These representations go back to other classical prototypes and various currents are sometimes crystallized in the same sculpture.

ography is unique. The monuments known to me are the following: [2]

1. Stele from Hatrize near Conflans. Nancy, Musée lorrain.[3]
2. Stele from Hiéraple near Forbach. Museum of Metz.[4]
3. Stele from Lohr near Luetzelstein. Museum of Saverne.[5]
4. Fragment of a stele from Gundershoffen. Mulhouse, Industrial Society.[6]
5. Stele from Onsdorf (Kr. Saarburg). Trier, Provinzialmuseum.[7]
6. Stele from Godramstein. Mannheim Museum.[8]
7. Stele from Flemlingen near Edenkoben. Speyer, Historisches Museum der Pfalz.[9]
8. Fragment of a stele from the Wasenburg near Niederbronn. Strasbourg, Museum of Alsatian Antiquities.[10]
9. Fragment of a stele. Wasenburg, Musée de Thermes.[11]
10. Stele from Spachbach near Woerth. Strasbourg.[12]

[2] In addition to the monuments included in this list there are several problematical ones:

Ésperandieu, Récueil (hereinafter cited as E), XI, no. 544, gives an aedicula from Cannstatt in the Stuttgart Museum for which Paret (Germania, ix, pp. 6–13, fig. 10) reconstructs the figures of Mercury and Bacchus. This reconstruction is based on the dubious inference that the grapevine ornament of the aedicula refers to Bacchus. No piece of the child's body was discovered, and only minor fragments of Mercury and a goat.

E, V, no. 4483 quotes a fragment of a stele with Mercury and Bacchus which was included in Hildenbrand's catalogue of the Speyer Museum (Röm. Steinsaal, p. 31, no. 62d). Ésperandieu was unable to see it and suggests it might be in the storerooms. Said to be from St. Ingbert.

Henning, Denkmäler . . . Strassburg, p. 50, pl. xlvi, 7, gives a relief of Mercury who perhaps held a small Bacchus. The left side of this is very damaged and the photograph fails to reveal any traces of the child. From Görsdorf, Kr. Niederbronn.

[3] E, V, no. 4413.

[4] E, V, no. 4471.

[5] E, V, no. 4491. Very damaged. Inscription (C.I.L. xiii, 4538): [D]eo [Mercurio . . .] sacra . . . v(otum) s(olvit) [l(ibens) m(erito)].

[6] E, VII, no. 5653. He reproduces also a drawing from Ravenez, Alsace illustrée, iii, pl. XIII, 1 which shows fragments since lost. Inscription (C.I.L. xiii, 6034): Deo Me(rcurio) S. [S]everus ?] equoni e]x p(romisso) l(ibens) l(aetus) m(erito). Dates in second decade of the third century A.D.

[7] E, VI, no. 5126.

[8] E, VIII, no. 5908.

[9] E, X, no. 5969.

[10] E, VI, no. 5639; Henning, op. cit., p. 50, pl. xlvi, 3. Surface hacked away.

[11] E, VII, no. 5605. Fragment of the lower abdomen of Mercury, part of his left arm, and the drapery wrapped about it. There are said to be traces of Bacchus, but these are not distinguishable in photographs. It may be accepted on the basis of no. 8 from the same site of the Wasenburg Mercury Temple.

[12] E, VII, no. 5569; corrections and illustration in X, pp. 23–24. Inscription (C.I.L. xiii, 11684a): Mercurio sacrum, Gentilis, Africani f(ilius), v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) [m(erito)].

11. Fragment of a stele from the city. Strasbourg.[13]
12. Fragment of a stele from the city. Strasbourg.[14]
13. Stele from Gersthofen. Augsburg, Maximilian Museum.[15]
14. Stele from Carnuntum. Vienna, Collection of Anton Widter.[16]
15. Statue from Mithraeum at Stockstadt.[17]
16. Seated statue from second Mithraeum at Stockstadt. Aschaffenburg, Geschichtsverein.[18]
17. Fragment of a statue from Ohmenhausen near Reutlingen. Museum of Stuttgart.[19]

An initial problem is to assure the consistency of the identification of the child seated on Mercury's left arm as Bacchus. Although this interpretation is incontestable for two reliefs (nos. 1 and 6) in which the god raises a bunch of grapes to his small protégé, and for a seated statue from Stockstadt (no. 16) where the child holds the same fruit, its universal applicability has been questioned. Because the young divinity of the Onsdorf stele (no. 5) clutches a money purse, he has been identified as the infant Plutos.[20] The same attribute — which could as well be a symbol of Mercury, the patron of successful trade and commerce, as a reference to the god of wealth — appears on several other monuments (nos. 3, 6 and the problematic Augsburg relief, no. 13, where the child is seated upon a purse).

In addition, the relief from Gundershoffen (no. 4) presents certain interpretative difficulties which, if resolved, may aid in answering Graeven's proposal. This votive monument from an important

[13] E, VII, no. 5494. Lower part destroyed in fire of 1870.

[14] E, VII, no. 5528. Bacchus destroyed, but traces of his arm remain.

[15] Germania Romana, iv, pl. XIX, 1; Mezger, Die röm. Steindenkmäler . . . im Maximilians-Museum, p. 20, no. xii. See below for problems in identifying the child.

[16] Benndorf, Archäologische-epigraphische Mittheilungen, ii, 1878, pp. 1–9, pl. 1. Found with a votive altar to Mercury and four other monuments dedicated to the god.

[17] E, XI, no. 294. Mercury's head and knees, part of his mantle and almost all of the goat at the left are restored. The child is also restored, save for the head and a piece of the torso. This Mithraeum dates from 210 A.D.

[18] E, XI, no. 309. Inscription on socle (C.I.L. xiii, 11788a): D(eo) i(nvicto) M(ithrae), Mercurio, Q(uintus) P(. . .) Gemellus v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) l(aetus) m(erito). This seems to be the unique example in major art of a seated Mercury holding the infant Bacchus, although similar iconography appears on a terracotta relief roundel in Turin (Heydemann, 3rd Winckelmannsprogramm, Halle, 1879, p. 43, no. 46 — not illustrated) and on Roman coins of Sagalassos in Psidia (Vorlegeblätter, series A, pl. XII, 5 a and c). For the coins see von Sallet, Zeitschrift für Numismatik, vii, p. 57. Neither coin agrees with the other and the looseness of the compositions argue against inspiration from a statuary representation.

[19] E, XI, no. 629.

[20] Graeven, Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst, xiv, 1905, p. 170. His figure 5 is a better reproduction of the stele than that of Esperandieu.

Alsatian Mercury sanctuary shows the child grasping a large fish in his right hand. One early commentator recognized in this attribute an oblique reference to the nymph character of Callisto and thus considered the representation that of Arkas being carried to his foster mother, Maia.[21] Panofka rightly discarded this hypothesis, but offered the ingenious suggestion that the relief depicted the rape of Herse by Hermes, to which Kephalos owed his birth [22] — this despite the fact that the small figure cannot be female. He cited the portrayal of Hermes on the coins of Kephaloidion (the modern Cefalù), as well as recorded relations between Hermes and Poseidon, to uphold his theory. Panofka also mentioned, but negated, the possibility that the fish might be a symbol of Bacchus, since Hesychius connected the word for fishing-net (*βάκχος*) with his name. These early nineteenth century scholars were not, of course, cognizant of the long tradition for the artistic figuration of Hermes and Dionysos in Greek art, the knowledge of which has only followed the research engendered by the discovery of the Hermes by Praxiteles. It is most probable that the child on the Gundershoffen stele is intended as Bacchus, holding the dolphin that was sacred to him and that was similarly associated with Mercury as a symbol of marine commerce.[23]

In only one instance does there seem to be any objective evidence that the child on Mercury's arm may not be Bacchus. Mezger, in a description of the high relief stele in Augsburg (no. 13), stated that on the shoulders of the little figure are clear attachments for wings which make it necessary to regard him as a good daemon or *Bonus Eventus*.[24] Also, Ferri speaks of the child as an "Amorino." [25] These attachments for lost wings are not visible in the available reproductions, but if this particular monument proves an exception to the normal scheme, it does not affect the interpretation of the remaining representations [26] and in iconographic type is clearly related to them.

In the absence of any decisive evidence to the contrary, it is safe

[21] Cavedoni, Bullettino dell'instituto di corrispondenza archeologico, 1834, p. 108 f. Cf. Schnoeringer (ibid., p. 44) who says no more than that it is a very curious allegory with Mercury holding a "sick child."

[22] Bonner Jahrbücher, xii, 1848, pp. 17–20, pl. V, 1.

[23] For example: Froehner, Terres cuites d'Asie de la coll. J. Greau, ii, pl. 91 — mould with caduceus and dolphin.

[24] Steindenkmäler, pp. 20–21.

[25] Arte romana sul Reno, p. 19 f., p. 186; cf. Arndt-Amelung, Einzelaufnahmen, no. 1065.

[26] If this winged figure could be interpreted as a soul, it would, on the contrary, substantiate the following theory of transmigratory significance.

to assume that all of the sculptures under consideration — with the exception of the Augsburg stele — portray Mercury with the infant Bacchus. But in the frozen renderings of provincial art the child becomes merely another attribute of his protector and may hold a money purse, the constant symbol of Mercury in the Roman sculpture of Gaul and Germany, or a caduceus which also does not relate to himself, but to his guide (nos. 9 and 10).

A further prerequisite to our understanding of the monuments, inasmuch as they are all votive gifts, is the determination of their "liturgical" implications. In these provincial works the representation of Mercury pausing to rest on his way to Nysa with the young god of wine has given way to a symbolic remembrance of the action. But if the intimate and realistic rapport between the two divinities has been lost, there is, of course, some deeper significance in the persistent recurrence of the representation. One may propose a synthesis of the concept of Hermes Psychopompos with that of Hermes Dionysophoros, a connection which probably existed in Greek times as well. A parallel is clear between the guide of blessed souls to the world beyond death and the conductor of little Dionysos to the happy phantasy-land of Nysa (which is actually called "heaven" by Pausanias in his description of the scene on the Amyclae throne — III, xviii, 11). This is corroborated by the fact that one of the pre-Praxitelean types for the depiction of the event is also employed in the portrayal of Hermes Psychopompos. In this type, which reveals an origin in painting rather than in sculpture, Hermes is seen in three-quarter view running rapidly to the left while he turns back his head to look at the large man-child poised on his left arm. The identification of the latter as Dionysos is assured in many examples,[27] although the inscription ARKAS on the coins of Pheneos [28] proves that the die-cutter used the type to illustrate a different episode among the deeds of Hermes. On Etruscan scarabs a modification of the same type is utilized to embody Hermes Psychopompos holding an eidolon in his left hand.[29] Without the subsidiary child and reversed to suit

[27] For example, in the Louvre vase G 755 (reproduced in Rizzo, Prassitele, pl. 105, 1) where the attendant figures are a satyr and a maenad. Similarly, the Reuss vase reproduced in Vorlegeblätter, pl. XII, 1a.

[28] Head, Principal Coins of the Greeks, pl. 24, no. 49; p. 42. Seltman, Greek Coins, pl. xxxv, 12; p. 166. Head dates these 400–336 B.C. Frequently the inscription is omitted.

[29] Furtwängler, Die antiken Gemmen, i, pl. 16, 54; p. 80; pl. 18, 12; pp. 87–88. Archaic style.

the exigencies of compositions which read from left to right, the type frequently occurs on Roman sarcophagi where Mercury leads a figure to the nether world.[30] Indeed, it often appears in scenes of departure from this world on monuments of all those antique mystery cults which promised a life after death to their initiates,[31] mystery cults in which Mercury became allied with the principal divinities by virtue of his chthonic significance. Further confirmation of the transmigratory meaning of Mercury holding the Bacchus-child, into which the observer could read the application to his own soul after death, is afforded by the above-mentioned dolphin of the Gundershoffen relief. The dolphin, sacred to Dionysos-Bacchus, is well known as a symbol of the conveying of fortunate souls to the Isles of the Blessed.[32]

The general significance inherent in the representation of Mercury with the infant Bacchus clarifies the religious symbolism of our monuments. It does not, however, explain the restriction of the subject to the votive sculptures of such a limited geographical area, with the center of production around Strasbourg in the region between the Upper Rhine and the Mosel River. This group of provincial works does not merely form a geographical unit; chronologically it seems to be included within the first quarter of the third century A.D.[33]

Given the geographical distribution, it is interesting to examine the history of the Legio VIII Augusta which had its administrative center at Strasbourg from the time of Vespasian to the end of the third or the beginning of the early fourth century.[34] In the years from 45 to 69 A.D. the soldiers of this legion had been stationed in Moesia close to the Thracian regions where two cities (Ulpia Pautalia and Anchialos) minted in Roman times coins on which were reproduced a statue of Hermes with the Dionysos infant.[35] This province is particularly

[30] For a provincial example of the type, see E, I, no. 111. Hanfmann, American Journal of Archaeology, xliii, 1939, p. 231 and note 2, fig. 2, discusses an interesting sarcophagus in Zagreb on which the reversed type is used for Mercury carrying Bacchus, with whom the deceased child is equated.

[31] For example, the frescoes of the Tomb of Vibia: Garuci, Storia dell'arte christiana, vi, pl. 494.

[32] Cf. Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen, Dionysiac Sarcophagi in Baltimore, p. 47, note 151. Dolphins appear in Etruscan tomb decoration and on innumerable Roman grave monuments.

[33] This statement is based upon preliminary research on the subject of stylistic development in the Roman provinces. For this group of sculptures, whatever there is of external evidence confirms the conclusions reached by stylistic analysis. The Augsburg and Carnuntum reliefs seem to be earlier, probably belonging to the late second century.

[34] Ritterling, Real-Encyclopädie, xii, col. 1653.

[35] Münzer, F. and Strack, M. L., Die antiken Münzen von Thrakien, p. 223, no. 427;

rich in Mithraic monuments and it was probably here that the legionnaires absorbed the exotic religion which they were to disseminate throughout Germania Superior.[36] The large number of sanctuaries discovered in the region which fell under the protection of the VIII Legion — at Koenigshoffen near Strasbourg, at Heddernheim, Mainz, Stockstadt, Dieburg and Neuwied, to mention a few [37] — is indicative of the important rôle played by its members in the diffusion of Mithraism. No less than sixteen Mithraea have been recognized on the Limes in Germania Superior.[38] Even more explicit is the testimony of numerous cult dedications by personnel of the legion [39] and of an inscription which informs us that a veteran restored the cult statue in the Mithraeum at Koenigshoffen.[40] If the evidence argues that the Legio VIII Augusta introduced the cult of Mithras to Germania Superior, it also suggests that the innovation represented by the Mercury monuments under consideration may have been accomplished at the same time. For at least two of our sculptures (nos. 15 and 16) were found in Mithraea, while others may have be-

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pl. VI, 12 (Anchialos). Filow, Numismatische Zeitschrift, 1918, pp. 39–41; pl. IX, 1 (Pautalia). Ruzicka in Bulicev Zbornik, 1921, pp. 667–670; pl. XIV. These coins have been considered reproductions of the Hermes of Praxiteles (Ruzicka), of the Kephisodotan Hermes and Dionysos (Rizzo, op. cit., pp. 9–10), and of the same subject by Timarchos (Klein, Jahreshefte des österreich. archäol. Institutes, xiv, 1911, pp. 98–111). This is not the place to elaborate the controversy, but Klein seems at least justified in placing the original statue after both Praxiteles and Kephisodotos, since the composition borrows something from each. The type of Hermes and Dionysos reflected bears no relation to our provincial examples; Hermes leans against a colonnette on which the child is seated. The coins post-date the departure of the VIII legion from Moesia — i.e. in the known impressions — but may serve as an indication that statues of the subject were set up in these Thracian centers and may have been familiar to Moesian recruits. — Cf. Filow, op. cit., p. 41.

[36] For the rôle of the VIII legion, see Cumont, Textes et Monuments, i, p. 256. At least in the Rhine and Danube areas, the spread of the Mithras cult was achieved by the army. As Cumont says, there was good reason for one of the grades to be called *milites* — "Mithras," Roscher's Lexicon, 11^2, col. 3033.

That this diffusion was accomplished without the intermediary of Rome is assured by the discovery of little bas-reliefs in Rhenish Mithraea which are of certain Pannonian or Moesian provenance, as well as by the fact that the cult monuments of the Rhone valley show no relations to the Rhenish ones. — Cumont, Les mystères de Mithra, p. 51.

[37] Wüst, "Mithras," Real-Encyclopädie, xv, col. 2153.

[38] Lehner, Bonner Jahrbücher, cxxix, 1924, pp. 51–52.

[39] Cumont, Textes et Monuments, ii, p. 153, no. 423 from Recking near Heilbronn (dated 148 A.D.); p. 154, no. 430, an altar from the Mithraeum of Gross-Krotzenburg; p. 165, no. 506 from Geneva (dated 201 A.D.).

[40] Ritterling, Real-Encyclopädie, xii, col. 1654.

longed to sanctuaries which have not as yet been excavated. There is, one must admit, a considerable time lag between the arrival of the legion from Moesia and the appearance of this group of monuments in the early third century. On the other hand, one might reasonably assume the existence of earlier sculptures of the type or of prototypes in bronze figurines and minor arts. But most convincing is the proof that the subject of Mercury with Bacchus received Mithraic interpretation and is intimately related to cult beliefs.

That Mercury himself was often the cult companion of Mithras is well documented by the presence of representations of the god and dedications to him in diverse Mithraea. Some outstanding examples may be cited. In the Mithraeum at Merida in Spain a large statue of a seated Mercury was discovered, inscribed with a dedication to Mithras.[41] Two statues of Mercury were found at Stockstadt, in the same Mithraeum from which our Mercury holding Bacchus (no. 15) derives.[42] A stele representing the divinity was excavated in the famous Heddernheim Mithras sanctuary.[43] Prominent in the Mithraeum at Dieburg were three Mercury monuments, one of which is the largest sculpture from the sanctuary.[44] In the Mithraeum at Koenigshoffen an altar was unearthed with a dedication to Cissonius, one of the indigenous Celtic divinities whose names are often found as epithets of Mercury.[45] This inclusion of the god into the hierarchy of Mithraism obviously transcends the astronomical affiliation of the planet Mercury.[46] We will find evidence for the actual syncretism of Mercury and Mithras among certain communities.

Bacchus also had his place in the divine constellation of the Mithras cult, possibly being identified with the original Mazdean god, Haoma.[47] Dedicatory inscriptions indicate that initiates and priests of Mithraism frequently participated in the mysteries of Liber Pater; one even refers to Liber as the cult companion of Mithras.[48] Further-

[41] No. 580 in the Museum. Inscription on lyre: Ann(o) col(oniae) CLXXX invicto deo Mithrae sacr(um) G. Accius Hedychrus pater a(nimo) l(ibente) p(osuit) — 159 A.D. Lantier, Inventaire des monuments . . . de la péninsule Ibérique, pt. I, p. 3, no. 7; pl. IV, fig. 7, with bibl. For the discovery, see Archäol. Anzeiger, 1914, col. 377, fig. 52.

[42] Fragment: E, XI, no. 292; E, XI, no. 295.

[43] E, XI, no. 146.

[44] Behn, Mithrasheiligtum zu Dieburg, pp. 32–33, nos. 8–9, figs. 33–34; pp. 37–38, no. 22, fig. 46 (small altar with inscription *Deo Xancto Mercurio*, etc.).

[45] Forrer, Mithra-Heiligtum von Königshofen, pp. 49–50, pl. XVI, 3.

[46] Cumont, Les mystères de M., p. 146, note 2.

[47] Cumont, Textes et Mon., i, p. 146.

[48] Ibid., p. 147; ii, inscriptions no. 15, 17, 19, 20, 22, 24, 147 and 522. Cumont and Wüst (Real-Encycl. xv, col. 2145) consider these as evidence of the cult alliance of

more, in many Mithraic communities the wine which is Bacchus' special gift to mankind seems to have been used as a sacred drink.[49] As Cumont states: "Le dieu qui le procure aux hommes, est rapproché de celui qui leur ouvre le chemin du ciel." [50] The grapes from which this beverage derives are represented on monuments such as a large relief of Mithra Tauroctonos from Heddernheim [51] or a marble statue of Mithras born from rocks, formerly in the Giustiniani collection.[52] Thus it is evident that Mercury and Bacchus each had his individual position, whether major or minor, in the Mithraic mysteries.

It is possible to go even further and to relate to the Mithras worship itself our specific iconography of Mercury carrying the infant Bacchus. This relation is attested by the preserved inscription on the seated statue from Stockstadt (no. 16).[53] The dedication reads: *Deo invicto Mithrae, Mercurio* . . . , proving the intimate alliance of Mercury and Mithras at this particular sanctuary. Elsewhere the affiliation is carried to the point where it results in a syncretistic unification of the two divinities. At least two inscriptions read: *Deo invicto Mercurio*,[54] another: *Deo Mercurio Mithrae*.[55]

This confusion between the two gods has long been recognized,[56] but the governing motivation for the assimilation has never been elaborated.[57] Cumont has advanced the most satisfactory explana-

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Mithras and Bacchus. Actually, they prove no more than that one person might belong to — or even officiate in — more than one mystery cult. The inscription no. 522, from Spain, does imply that Mithras, Liber and a Genius were cult companions.

[49] Ibid., p. 320.

[50] Cumont, Les mystères, p. 146, note 2.

[51] E, XI, no. 138. The main scene on the reverse shows Mithras and Sol standing behind a reclining bull. Mithras holds a drinking horn and Sol offers a bunch of grapes — Leipoldt, Die Religion des Mithra (Haas, Bilderatlas zur Religionsgeschichte, lief. 15), p. xi. Leipoldt calls the scene a sacred meal.

[52] Cumont, Textes et Mon., i, p. 147; ii, no. 69. There is a strong possibility, it must be admitted, that the grapes held by Mithras may be restored. Cumont quotes Maionica (Archäol.-epigraph. Mittheilungen, ii, 1878, p. 39) as a proponent of authenticity.

[53] See above, note 18. Cf. Leipoldt, op. cit., no. 26–27, pp. xiii–xiv.

[54] C.I.L., ix, 425; x, 6219.

[55] Inscription from Apt (Vaucluse): Revue épigraphique, v, 1903, no. 1545. Cf. Cumont, Les mystères, p. 146, note 2.

[56] As early as 1727 Dom Martin had recognized "la métamorphose qu'avoient fait les Gaulois de Mercure en Mithras." — Religion des Gaulois, ii, p. 105.

[57] Behn (Mithrash. zu Dieburg, p. 47) suggests a syllogistic explanation: Mercury was equivalent to the Germanic Wodan, whereas the latter was affiliated with Mithras; hence Mercury became identified with Mithras. This theory is elaborated in his article in ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ ii, 1927, p. 165 f.

tion, although he has not connected it with the transmigratory implications of Mercury holding the Bacchus child.[58] Mercury is identified with Mithras because both share one important office, the guidance of fortunate souls to heaven. Mithras probably inherited this function from certain solar gods of ancient Syrian cults.[59] This psychogogic aspect of Mithras is clearly expressed by Julian the Apostate.[60]

The inherent meaning of monuments which show Mercury holding the infant Bacchus has been established as a symbolic promise of life-after-death. When we then note the fusion of Mercury and Mithras, which is based precisely upon the psychopompic rôle common to both, the relation of our group of provincial monuments to the eschatological dogma of Mithraism is explained. We can understand the self-application which the initiate would read into these sculptures, as well as the localized absorption of this symbolism to the Mithras cults introduced into the Rhineland by the Legio VIII Augusta. The phenomenon is a striking instance of the documentary value of Roman provincial art, not only for the inculcation of the heritage of classical art into barbarian culture, but also for specific developments in the realm of religious speculation.

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[58] Les mystères, p. 146, note 2. Cf. Höfer, "Psychopompos," Roscher's Lexicon, iii², col. 3256–3257.

[59] Cumont, Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain, 4th ed., p. 264, note 90.

[60] Julian, Caesars, 336c: "*καὶ ἡνίκα ἂν ἐνθένδε ἀπιέναι δέῃ, μετὰ τῆς ἀγαθῆς ἐλπίδος ἡγεμόνα θεὸν εὐμενῆ καθιστὰς σεαυτῷ.*"